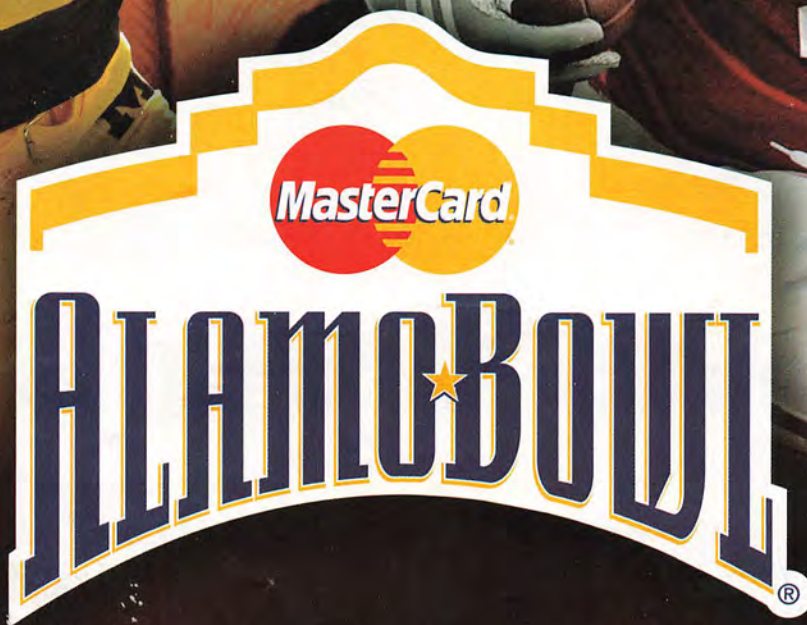
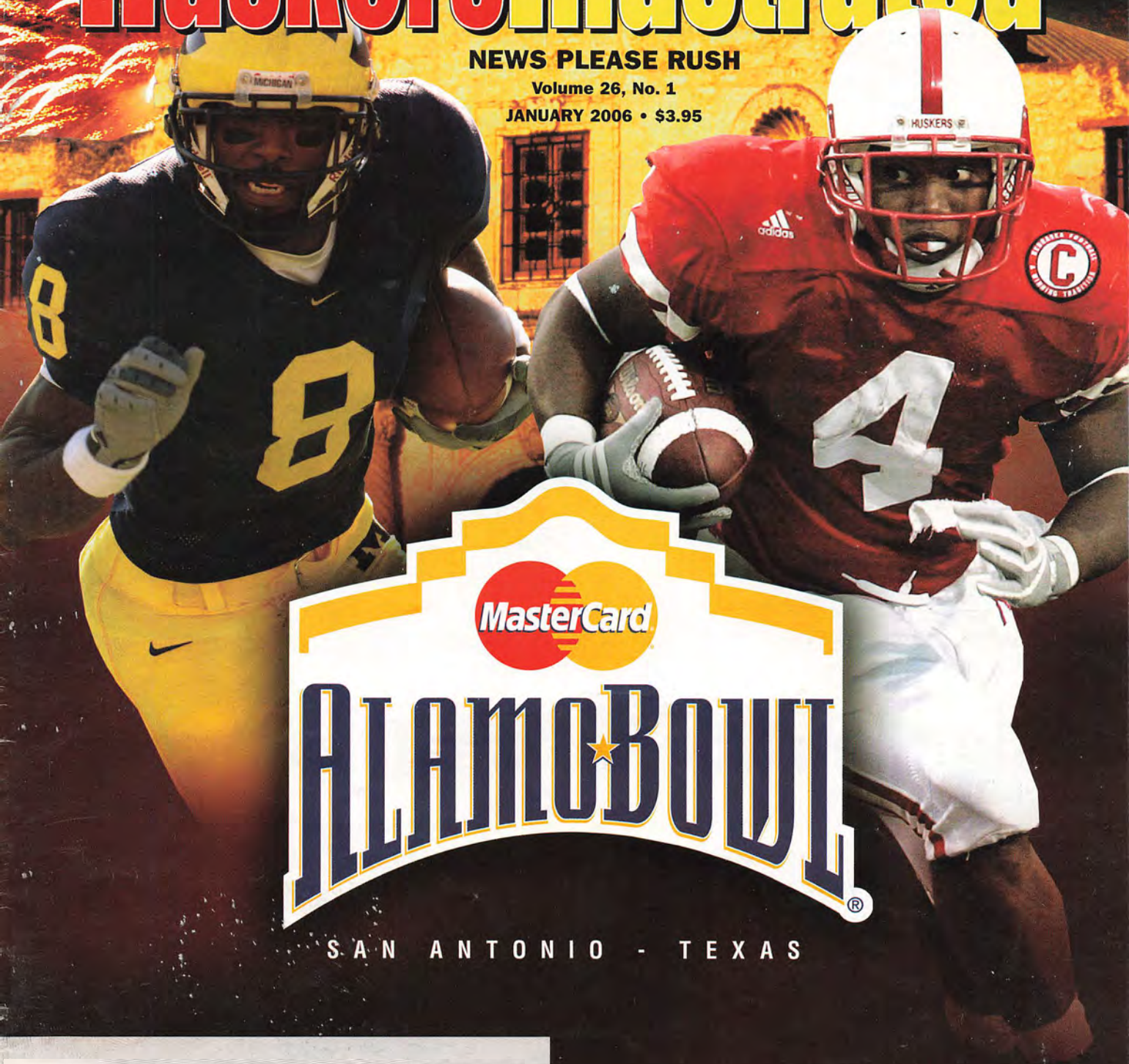


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JANUARY 2006 • \$3.95



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Michigan Memories

The Alamo Bowl meeting comes eight years after the two teams split the national championship



Brian Hill

NEBRASKA AND MICHIGAN will finally get together, eight years after many would have preferred they play to settle a national championship.

The two college football powers have met five times, and those matchups are chronicled in our feature story in this edition of *Huskers Illustrated* and in contributing editor Mike Babcock's "Final Word."

As most followers of the two schools no doubt remember, probably the most interesting match-up didn't occur on the field but in the voting for the national championship at the end of the 1997 season. A day after unbeaten and top-ranked Michigan held off Washington State 21-16 in the Rose Bowl, undefeated Nebraska whipped Tennessee 42-17 in the Orange Bowl.

Did quarterback Scott Frost's dramatic postgame speech and the fact that it was Tom Osborne's final game sway the voting in the Coaches' poll, resulting in a split championship? Or was it just the way Nebraska dominated a good Tennessee team, quarterbacked by Peyton Manning?

Curt McKeever provides a closer look at the wild ending eight years ago in "From The Beat," part of our package previewing the Dec. 28 Alamo Bowl meeting between the Huskers and Wolverines, two of the all-time winningest programs in college football.

ON THE COVER

Senior wide receiver Jason Avant (8) leads the Michigan offense with 74 catches, while senior I-back Cory Ross (4) leads Nebraska in rushing and is second in receiving. *Cover photos courtesy Michigan Sports Information, Scott Bruhn and the Alamo Bowl/Nancy H. Belcher. Cover design by Bret McVey, Blaze Graphics.*

Michigan is atop the all-time win list with 848 victories, while Nebraska ranks fourth with 793.

Although the Wolverines are a nearly two-touchdown favorite, it's difficult to get a handle on their mindset entering their first game since they ended a disappointing regular season with a 25-21 loss to Big 10 rival Ohio State. Michigan, rated No. 4 in the preseason, started out 3-3, before handing Penn State its only loss (27-25) and starting a four-game winning streak.

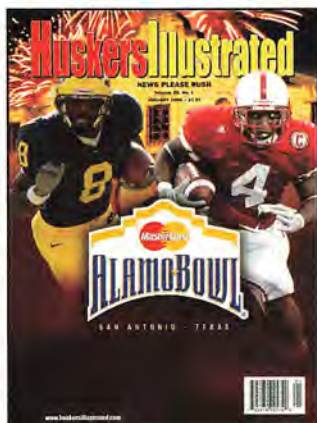
But after the loss to the Buckeyes, Michigan settled for an Alamo Bowl invitation after Outback Bowl officials chose to invite Iowa to the Jan. 2 game, even though the Wolverines finished with the same record (7-4) as the Hawkeyes and won the meeting between the two teams.

Michigan needs a victory to avoid becoming the school's first team since 1984 to finish a season with five or more losses. Bo Schembechler's 1984 squad finished the year 6-6 after dropping a 24-17 Holiday Bowl decision to Brigham Young.

Nebraska, meanwhile, rebounded from a three-game losing streak that left it in danger of missing the postseason for the second straight season. The Huskers finished the regular season with two straight victories for the first time since 1999, including a shocking 30-3 upset of Colorado.

The impact of that victory could be tempered by CU's performance in a 70-3 loss to Texas a week later, but the Huskers still take confidence and momentum to the Alamodome, where they've had past success.

San Antonio will be used to seeing red by the end of December. As this issue went to press, the top-ranked Husker volleyball team had just completed a regional sweep of UCLA and Florida to advance to the NCAA semifinals, which also happened to be in the Alamo city. ■



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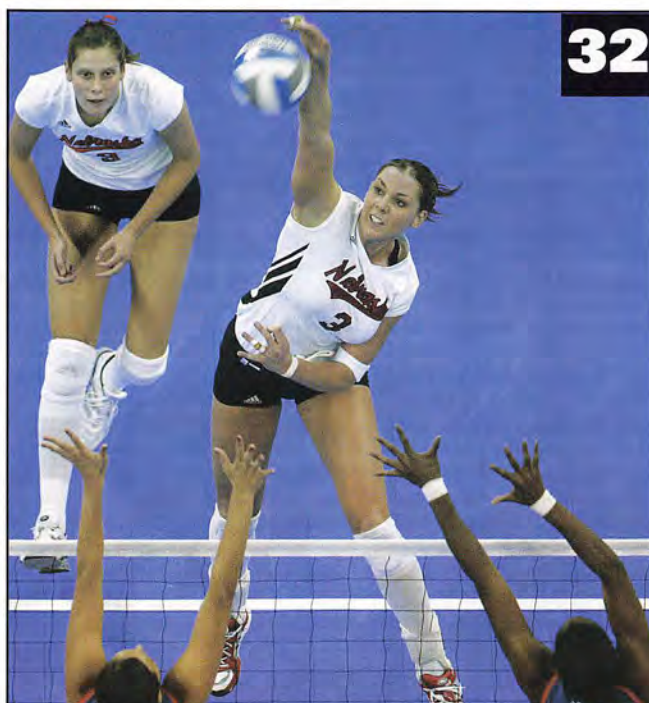
Nebraska will be back in the Alamo Bowl, facing Michigan on Dec. 28. The Huskers defeated Michigan State 17-3 in the 2003 game (above), under interim coach Bo Pelini. *By Mike Babcock*

NEXT ISSUE

The bowl review edition will be mailed Jan. 17. Check for updates at huskersillustrated.com.

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Recruiting Texas

Deep in the heart of Texas . . .

Among other things, the Alamo Bowl will provide Nebraska with potentially valuable recruiting exposure in Texas. The Cornhuskers will "welcome any high school coach in the area or from the state of Texas to come to our practices and watch our players and have a chance to sit down and dialogue with our coaches," coach Bill Callahan said. "So I think it's invaluable from that respect."

High school football is a passion in Texas, which had a population of nearly 21 million in 2000, when the last census was taken. Only California is more populous. "There are so many talented and terrific players in the state of Texas. Because of the population base, there's just an abundance of players down there and we've really committed ourselves to evaluating that area a little bit closer," said Callahan.

Five Cornhusker assistants have recruiting responsibilities in Texas.

The roster includes 10 players from Texas, five of them on the two-deeps: junior offensive guard Greg Austin (Cypress), junior wide receiver Grant Mulkey (Arlington), sophomore wide receiver Terrence Nunn (Houston), sophomore tight end J.B. Phillips (Colleyville) and freshman running back Cody Glenn (Rusk). The others are: senior defensive tackle Matt O'Shea (Dallas) and his brother junior linebacker Mark O'Shea (Dallas), place-kicker David Dyches (Spring), sophomore cornerback Titus Brothers (San Antonio) and redshirted freshman linebacker Adam Furtwengler



Greg Austin



Terrence Nunn

(Corpus Christi).

Mulkey, the O'Shea brothers and Furtwengler came to Nebraska as walk-ons. Mark O'Shea is redshirting this season after transferring from Iona.

Austin, Phillips, Brothers and Dyches were among six Texans in the Cornhuskers' 2003 recruiting class, the heaviest concentration since the 1989 class, which included seven. By comparison, the 2003 class, coach Frank Solich's last at Nebraska, included only five in-state players.

The Cornhuskers' recruiting focus is "still in-state," Callahan said. But obviously, with a population of 1.7 million, the state can't fill Nebraska's recruiting needs.

Callahan's first two recruiting classes included four Texans, Nunn in 2004 and Glenn, Brodrick Hunter (Humble) and Wallace Franklin (Beaumont), both wide receivers, in 2005. Hunter and Franklin didn't meet eligibility requirements, however, and never enrolled.

Nebraska has recruited in Texas over the past 30-plus years, attracting at least a player or two most years during Tom Osborne's tenure as coach. Rudy Johnson (Aransas Pass) and Willie Paschall (San Antonio) played on Bob Devaney's early teams, but the national championship teams in 1970 and 1971 listed only one Texan on the rosters, reserve center Doug Jamail (Bellaire).

Nebraska's all-time football All-America list includes 10 Texans, the first offensive tackle Kelvin Clark (Odessa) in 1978.

Texas recruits, beginning with the Osborne era (position listed is the one at which the player was recruited), and years lettered:

1973	Chucky Baker (Port Arthur)	E	
	Jason Justice (LaMarque)	RB	
1974	*Kelvin Clark (Odessa)	DT-OT	1976-77-78
	Tom Sorley (Big Spring)	QB	1976-77-78
1975	Richard Berns (Wichita Falls)	RB	1976-77-78
	Keith Bishop (Midland)	DT	1976
1976	Lee Atkins (San Angelo)	DE	
	*Junior Miller (Midland)	TE-DE	1977-78-79
1977	Maurice McCloney (Beaumont)	SE	1978
	Sammy Sims (Lubbock)	DB	1979-80-81
1978	None		
1979	Robert Alven (Dallas)	OG	
	Nate Mason (Greenville)	QB	1980-81-82-83
	Ricky Simmons (Greenville)	WB	1980-82-83
1980	Mark Behning (Denton)	C-OT	1982-83-84
	Turner Gill (Fort Worth)	QB	1981-82-83
	Ricky Greene (Seminole)	IB	1983-84
	Scott McLaughlin (Houston)	OG	
1981	Kenneth Shead (Plano)	OL-DL	1983-84-85
1982	None		
1983	None		
1984	Wendell Wooten (LaMarque)	QB	1986-88
1985	Bill Bobbora (Amarillo)	OL	1987-88-89
	Kris Lamb (Waxahachie)	FB	
	John Roschal (Houston)	OL	1988-89
	**Broderick Thomas (Houston)	DE	1985-86-87-88
1986	Jon Crippen (Houston)	DB	1989-90
	*Doug Glaser (Mesquite)	OL	1987-88-89
	Jeff Miller (Houston)	QB	
	*Kenny Walker (Crane)	DE	1989-90
	**Jake Young (Midland)	OL	1986-87-88-89
1987	Jeff Chaney (Friona)	OT	1990
	Chris Garrett (Snyder)	TE-LB	1988-89-90-91
	#Tim Jackson (Dallas)	S	1987-88
	Keithen McCant (Grand Prairie)	QB	1990-91
	William Thomas (Houston)	DB	1989-90
1988	Jason Daniel (Midland)	OT	
	*Travis Hill (Pearland)	DE	1989-90-91-92
	Andre McDuffy (Hurst)	IB-FB	1991-92

	William Washington (Tyler)	TE	1989-90-91-92
1989	Byron Bennett (Rowlett)	K-P	1990-91-92-93
	Marvin Callies (East Bernard)	QB	
	Chad Hunter (Garland)	SS	
	Jerry Irons (The Woodlands)	NG	1991
	Mike Jefferson (Rowlett)	NG	1990
	John Reece (Houston)	FS	1989-91-92-93
	Billy Wade (Houston)	TE	1992-93
1990	Corey Dixon (Dallas)	WB	1991-92-93
1991	*Aaron Graham (Denton)	OL	1992-93-94-95
1992	Scott Saltsman (Wichita Falls)	MG	1994-95-96
1993	Sean Noster (San Antonio)	OLB	1994
	**Aaron Taylor (Wichita Falls)	OG	1994-95-96-97
	Shane Wells (Odessa)	P-PK	
1994	Octavious McFarlin (Bastrop)	DB	1994-95-96-97
1995	Kris Brown (Southlake)	PK	1995-96-97-98
	Julius Jackson (Gainesville)	LB	1996-97-98-99
1996	Justin Ferrell (McAllen)	OL	
	Clint Finley (Cuero)	QB	1997-98-99-00
1997	#Brandon Harrison (Gainesville)	DB	1997
	Joe Walker (Arlington)	DB	1997-98-99-00
1998	*Keyuo Craver (Harleton)	DB	1998-99-00-01
	Mike Demps (Fort Worth)	DB	
	Justin Smith (Sherman)	RE	1999-00-01-02
1999	None		
2000	Willie Amos (Sweetwater)	ROV	2000-01-03-04
	Lannie Hopkins (Rowlett)	WLB	2002
	T.J. Hollowell (Copperas Cove)	SLB	2000-01-02-03
	Nick Povendo (Keller)	OT	2002-03-04
2001	Danieal Manning (Corsicana)	CB	
2002	Jermaine Leslie (Weatherford)	OL	
	#Demorrio Williams (Beckville)	WLB	2002-03
2003	Greg Austin (Cypress)	OL	2003-04-current
	Titus Brothers (Converse)	DB	current
	Steve Craver (Hurst)	FS	
	David Dyches (Spring)	PK	2003-04
	J.B. Phillips (Colleyville)	TE	2004-current
	Adrain Turner (Terrell)	DB	
2004	Terrence Nunn (Houston)	WR	2004-current
2005	Cody Glenn (Rusk)	RB	current
	*All-American		
	#Junior college transfer		

Quick Hits

ALL-BIG 12 FOOTBALL

Cornhusker defensive end Adam Carriker earned first-team All-Big 12 recognition from the Associated Press. The junior from Kennewick (Wash.) has been credited with a conference-leading 9.5 quarterback sacks among his 16 tackles for losses. He also has had 17 quarterback hurries.

Nebraska has had at least one first-team all-conference honoree on either the AP or the coaches' team every season since 1958. Middle linebacker Barrett Ruud was a first-team pick last season.

The Cornhuskers weren't represented on this year's coaches' all-conference first team. Junior center Kurt Mann, freshman place-kicker Jordan Congdon, sophomore middle linebacker Corey McKeon and senior strong safety Daniel Bullocks were included on the AP all-conference second team, while the coaches picked senior I-back Cory Ross as well as Carriker and Bullocks to their second team.

Senior guard Brandon Koch, senior tackle Seppo Evwaraye, sophomore weakside linebacker Bo Ruud, redshirted freshman wide receiver Nate Swift, senior punter Sam Koch, sophomore wide receiver Terrence Nunn and Ross all earned honorable mention on the AP team.

Nunn and Ross were included as "all-purpose" players.

Mann, McKeon, Nunn, Koch, senior defensive tackle Titus Adams, junior defensive end Jay Moore and sophomore cornerback Courtney Grixby received honorable mention on the coaches' team.

Koch and Nunn (as a punt returner) earned first-team all-conference recognition from the Kansas City Star, with Mann, Carriker, McKeon, Bullocks and Congdon on the Star's second team.

Koch was not among three finalists for the Ray Guy Award as the nation's top collegiate punter, even though he ranks third in Division I-A of the NCAA with a 45.86-yard average.

AP All-Big 12 First Team

Offense

WR — Jarrett Hicks, Jr. (Texas Tech); Joel Filani, Jr. (Texas Tech)

TE — Davie Thomas, Sr. (Texas)

OL — Justin Blalock, Jr. (Texas); Davin Joseph, Sr. (Oklahoma); Tony Palmer, Sr. (Missouri); Jonathan Scott, Sr. (Texas); Scott Stephenson, Jr. (Iowa State)

QB — Vince Young, Jr. (Texas)

RB — Adrian Peterson, So. (Oklahoma); Taurean Henderson, Sr. (Texas Tech)

All-purpose — Brad Smith, Sr. (Missouri)

PK — Mason Crosby, Jr. (Colorado)

Defense

DL — Adam Carriker, Jr. (Nebraska); Dusty Dvoracek, Sr. (Oklahoma); Charlton Keith, Sr. (Kansas); Rodrigue Wright, Sr. (Texas)

LB — Rufus Alexander, Jr. (Oklahoma); Tim Dobbins, Sr. (Iowa State); Aaron Harris, Sr. (Texas); Nick Reid, Sr. (Kansas)

DB — Cedric Griffin, Sr. (Texas); Michael Huff, Sr. (Texas); Maurice Lane, Sr. (Baylor); Dwayne Slay, Sr. (Texas Tech)

P — Daniel Sepulveda, Jr. (Baylor)

COMING BACK

Despite his success, Carriker isn't planning on declaring for the NFL draft and leaving Nebraska before his senior season. He told the Lincoln Journal Star he will return. "Everything I do is going to be for the last time," he said. "It's going to have a lot more meaning just knowing it's my senior year."

FRESHMAN ALL-AMERICANS

Congdon and defensive end Barry Turner were among 27 players selected to the Rivals.com Freshman All-America first team. Congdon has made 18-of-22 field goal attempts and 28-of-29 extra-point attempts, while Turner is third on the team with six sacks for 46 yards in losses.

Arkansas, California, Oregon and Texas A&M also placed more than one player on the first team.

BOWL MATCH-UPS

With Nebraska's game against Michigan in the Alamo Bowl, the Big 12 will be represented in eight bowls total, including the Rose Bowl's national championship battle between Texas and USC. This will be the fourth time in the last five years that a Big 12 team has

played for the BCS national title.

Dec. 23	Fort Worth Bowl	Kansas (6-5) vs. Houston (6-5)
Dec. 27	Champs Sports Bowl	Colorado (7-5) vs. Clemson (7-4)
Dec. 29	Holiday Bowl	Oklahoma (7-4) vs. Oregon (10-1)
Dec. 30	Independence Bowl	Missouri (6-5) vs. South Carolina (7-4)
Dec. 31	Houston Bowl	Iowa State (7-4) vs. TCU (10-1)
Jan. 2	Cotton Bowl	Texas Tech (9-2) vs. Alabama (9-2)
Jan. 4	Rose Bowl	Texas (12-0) vs. USC (12-0)

SCHEDULE ADDITION

Troy has been added to the Nebraska football team's 2006 non-conference schedule, according to the Troy website. The Trojans are slated to visit Memorial Stadium on Sept. 23, the week after the Cornhuskers are scheduled to play Southern California at the Los Angeles Coliseum.

Nebraska, which has not confirmed the addition to Troy to the schedule, would still have to add two more non-conference opponents to its 2006 schedule.

NEW INDOOR HOME

The Cornhuskers have been practicing for the bowl game in the new indoor facility north of Memorial Stadium. "It's much brighter, aesthetically," coach Bill Callahan said. "It's a lot more fun for our kids. It's broader, bigger. It has size that we can't get in the Cook (Pavilion). The one positive about being in the Cook is that the field surface is much faster because it's been laid down for quite some time.

"But our new facility, with the brightness and with the light we get, just enhances our practice atmosphere. The turf is still not fully settled, but it's much better than what it was weeks ago. I know that our maintenance crews and our facilities personnel worked hard, worked diligently to get that surface at the same level, at the same performance that our field level is at currently."

The surface won't be comparable to that in the stadium for, "I believe, another few months or so," Callahan said. "But we're going to take every advantage of it as we can. If we need to, we'll go back in the Cook for a speed practice. But from here on in, we're scheduled to be in the new facility.

"And I want to be in there. I want our players to get comfortable with that surface."



Sarah Pavan

ALL-BIG 12 VOLLEYBALL

Nebraska dominated the Big 12 coaches' volleyball awards. Sophomore Sarah Pavan was the conference player of the year. Senior Jennifer Saleaumua was the defensive player of the year. Jordan Larson was the freshman of the year. And John Cook was coach of the year.

The award was Cook's second in his six seasons at Nebraska.

Along with Pavan, senior Melissa Elmer and junior Christina Houghtelling were included on the all-conference first team, while Saleaumua

and Larson were on the second team.

Pavan, Elmer, Houghtelling and Saleaumua all were named to the AVCA All-Central Region team, with Larson, the Central Region freshman of the year, receiving honorable mention.

Coaches All-Big 12 First Team

MB — Melissa Elmer, Sr. (Nebraska); Josi Lima, Sr. (Kansas); Leticia Armstrong, So. (Texas); Brand Magee, Jr. (Texas)

OH — Sarah Pavan, So. (Nebraska); Christina Houghtelling, Jr. (Nebraska); Laura Jones, Sr. (Texas A&M); Agata Rezende, Sr. (Kansas State); Jessica Vander Kooi, Jr. (Missouri)

S — Lindsey Hunter, Sr. (Missouri); Michelle Moriarty, So. (Texas)

RS — Allie Griffin, Sr. (Colorado)

ALL-AMERICA HONORS

Husker senior Kayte Tranel finished 28th at the NCAA Cross County Championships at Terre Haute, Ind., in late November to earn All-America recognition. Her finish was the highest by a Husker woman since 1993, when Theresa Stelling finished 24th. Tranel, who didn't run cross country at Hampton (Neb.) High School, is the fifth All-American in Nebraska women's cross country history.

Tranel, a Husker captain, finished 15th at the Big 12 meet and seventh at the NCAA Midwest Regional, to qualify for the national championship meet. ■

Latest Greatest?

How do the top-ranked Trojans stack up against Nebraska's best teams?



**Mike
BABCOCK**

AS WITH REAL ESTATE SALES, this debate depends on location, location, location.

If Southern California weren't located in Los Angeles, a major media market, suggesting that the top-ranked Trojans are the best in college football history wouldn't be taken seriously.

If they defeat Texas in the Rose Bowl, and that's a big if, they will be part of an unprecedented run by a program, three consecutive national championships. No one could dispute that.

But the best college team ever? This one? Hardly.

Nebraska had two that were better. And even a decisive victory against Texas wouldn't weigh the non-debate in Southern California's favor. Consider the numbers.

Offensively, the Trojans are comparable to Nebraska's 1995 national championship team. And they do have two Heisman Trophy winners. But even if they were to be granted an edge on offense, and it would be gratuitous given the teams' statistics, they couldn't match Nebraska's defense in 1995.

The 1995 Cornhuskers ranked second in the nation in scoring defense and 13th in total defense, while Southern California ranks 27th and 39th, respectively. The Trojans had close calls against Notre Dame and Fresno State, not to mention a 10-point victory against Arizona State early in the season.

Nebraska's narrowest margin of victory in 1995 was 14 points, against Washington State.

In addition, Southern California plays in a soft conference. If not for the Trojans and their remarkable success, the Pac-10 would have attracted little national attention this season.

Oregon is the only other conference team with a chance to finish in the top 10, something Colorado, Kansas State and Kansas all did in 1995. And Nebraska beat those three by a combined 134-49.

Finally, Southern California plays second-ranked Texas in the Rose Bowl. Though the Trojans won't be playing on their home field, they get to remain at home while Texas has to travel, a decided advantage, roughly comparable to playing the Longhorns in Dallas or Houston — but better.

So location will be a factor in another way.

Anyhow, Nebraska wrapped up the 1995 national championship with a 62-24 blasting of Florida, which, like Texas, was second-ranked. And the blasting took place in Phoenix.

The Trojans won't beat Texas that decisively, even in the

neighbor's backyard.

Nebraska's 1971 national championship team also comes out ahead of the Trojans, though the match-up might be a little more even. They might be better offensively, but they're not nearly as good defensively. Nebraska ranked fifth nationally in total defense and second in scoring defense in 1971.

The Cornhuskers had two Outland Trophy winners, one of whom also won the Lombardi Award, and a Heisman Trophy winner to match Southern California's Matt Leinert and Reggie Bush.

And they played in a tougher conference. The Big Eight in 1971 was far superior to the Pac-10 in 2005. Nebraska, Oklahoma and Colorado ranked first, second and third in the final Associated Press poll, an unprecedented conference sweep that, it's safe to say, will never be duplicated.

Plus, they played an undefeated and No. 2-ranked team twice, beating Oklahoma in the "Game of the Century" at Norman 35-31 and then Alabama in the Orange Bowl game 38-6.

Except for the Oklahoma game, Nebraska was never pushed in 1971, allowing more than seven points only two other times — against Oklahoma State (41-13) and Kansas State (44-17).

Today's video-game mentality has placed a premium on offense, and Southern California can rack up yards and points. But the Trojans don't have a best-of-all-time defense.

In fact, they're most comparable to Nebraska's "Scoring Explosion" team in 1983, averaging more yards but fewer points, with a defense that's not quite as good statistically.

Again, Southern California is one victory away from the best three-season run in college football history. But the 2005 Trojans aren't better than two Nebraska teams and probably a handful of others, among them the Trojans in 1972, Miami in 2001 and Oklahoma in 1974. And that's not including teams such as Army in 1945 and Notre Dame in 1947. In each case, defense entered into the equation.

With a victory in Pasadena on Jan. 4, Texas could do everyone a favor and end the greatest-ever talk, at least as it relates to Southern California. Then the debate would focus on the Longhorns. Considering their defense, that would be more reasonable anyway. Location wouldn't be as much of a factor. ■

Mike Babcock is a former sports columnist for the Lincoln Journal Star. He has covered Nebraska football for more than 25 years. Mike can be reached at MBABCOCK1@neb.rr.com or P.O. Box 6782, Lincoln, NE 68506.

USC 2005 (12-0)	
Hawaii	63-17
*Arkansas	70-17
Oregon	45-13
Arizona State	38-28
*Arizona	42-21
Notre Dame	34-31
Washington	51-24
*Washington St.	55-13
*Stanford	51-21
California	35-10
*Fresno State	50-42
*UCLA	66-19
(Rose Bowl)	
vs. Texas	
Nebraska 1995 (12-0)	
Oklahoma State	64-21
Michigan State	50-10
*Arizona State	77-28
*Pacific	49-7
*Washington St.	35-21
*Missouri	57-0
*Kansas State	49-25
Colorado	44-21
*Iowa State	73-14
Kansas	41-3
*Oklahoma	37-0
(Fiesta Bowl)	
Florida	62-24
Nebraska 1971 (13-0)	
*Oregon	34-7
*Minnesota	35-7
*Texas A&M	34-7
*Utah State	42-6
Missouri	36-0
*Kansas	55-0
Oklahoma State	41-13
*Colorado	31-7
*Iowa State	37-0
Kansas State	44-17
Oklahoma	35-31
Hawaii	45-3
(Orange Bowl)	
Alabama	38-6
*Home games	

Wild Ending

Nebraska, Michigan meet eight years later than both sides would have preferred



Curt McKEEVER

THE OUTBACK BOWL'S SELECTION of Iowa over Michigan to face Florida was hardly a loss to the folks at the Alamo Bowl — or to Wolverine fans looking to settle a score.

Finally, although it comes eight years later than both sides would have preferred, we get Nebraska versus Michigan.

If you don't remember the wild ending to the 1997 season, allow me to turn back the clock.

Big Red entered its Orange Bowl match-up against No. 3 Tennessee with a 12-0 record and No. 2 ranking.

Michigan, a clear No. 1 choice in both The Associated Press and USA Today/ESPN coaches' polls, was 11-0 heading into its Rose Bowl battle against Washington State.

And a battle it was. The Wolverines were holding on as Ryan Leaf threw a final toss into the end zone before they claimed a 21-16 victory. Afterward, ABC analysts John Saunders and Todd Blackledge declared the Blue and Gold national champs, and Michigan quarterback Brian Griese wasn't about to disagree.

"We played the toughest schedule in the country, by far. To come to the Rose Bowl and play a very tough Washington State team . . . I ask you, is there anything else you want us to do?" Griese said to a national audience.

Indeed, the Wolverines did defeat six ranked teams (at the time they played them) — three more than Nebraska. Even so, they still had to wait a day to see how the Huskers and Tennessee fared before there could be dancing in the streets of Ann Arbor.

They also had to overcome the TV heads at CBS, which aired the Orange Bowl and did all it could to promote its game as having national championship implications.

When Nebraska clobbered the Peyton Manning-led Volunteers 42-17, CBS gladly stuck Husker quarterback Scott Frost in front of the cameras.

"If your job depended on playing either Michigan or Nebraska, who would you rather play?" Frost asked.

Then, he launched into a delivery that would have made you think he was headed toward a career as a defense lawyer.

"If all the pollsters honestly think after watching the Rose Bowl and watching the Orange Bowl that Michigan could beat Nebraska, go ahead and vote for Michigan, by all means," Frost said. "But I don't think there's anybody out there with a clear conscience who can say that Nebraska and that great man, Tom Osborne, doesn't deserve a national championship for this. At least a share."

When the 70 media members who voted in the AP poll remained true to the Wolverines — who garnered 50.5 first-place votes (interestingly, it was Blackledge who split his No. 1 pick) — it was up to the coaches to decide whether there would be a split championship for the 10th time in the 48 seasons of the two-poll system.

As it turned out, 24 of the 62 coaches changed their minds about who was best, and voted NU No. 1, giving the Huskers

32 first-place votes and, by almost the narrowest-possible margin (1,520 points to 1,516), Tom Osborne retired with his third national crown.

"I'm just disappointed," Carr said when told of the news. "I've said that if we didn't win in the coaches' poll it would be disappointing. I don't have any other comment on it."

For his part, Osborne didn't try to discount the possibility that his retirement might have swayed some of his colleagues.

"My feeling is that how you vote should be determined by what team you feel would be favored over every other team at the end of the year — regardless of when they last won the national championship, or which coach is retiring, or all those sidebars," he said. "Apparently, enough coaches felt that we'd be favored over anybody. It doesn't mean we'd win. We might have played Michigan and got beat."

Given some more time to reflect, both coaches sounded happy sharing the title.

"When you go 13-0, you hope your players get some kind of recognition," Osborne said. "I'm glad their efforts were rewarded."

At a celebration back on the Michigan campus, Carr said, "I think it's something we'll appreciate even more in years to come."

Well, we're eight years down the road. And while Osborne is running for governor, Carr is still trying to secure another national title.

Like Nebraska, Michigan brings a 7-4 record into the Alamo Bowl. The Wolverines overcame a 3-3 start in which they lost to Notre Dame (17-10), at Wisconsin (23-20) and Minnesota (23-20) to win four straight contests before dropping their regular-season finale to Ohio State (25-21).

They'll be playing Nebraska for just the sixth time, and the first since beating the Huskers 27-23 in the 1986 Fiesta Bowl.

Carr, whose team is the only one to beat Penn State this season, has a feel for what his team will

get.

"I've known Bill Callahan for a long time, and when he was at Wisconsin, they had some of their best teams when he was running their offense," he said. "So I'm sure it's going to be a great game."

Callahan was Wisconsin's offensive line coach from 1990-94 and was at Illinois from 1980-86.

"Having an opponent like Michigan is a great classic match-up for us," Callahan said. "(Michigan's) always been a good football team. I don't care what year it is or what their record is."

This pairing might not generate the same excitement as it would've eight years ago, but you know it'll be a lot of fun for Huskers and Wolverines still convinced their team would have won that match-up of unbeaten. ■



Quarterback Scott Frost stated NU's case for the title.

Curt McKeever is a sportswriter for the Lincoln Journal Star. In addition to reporting on football, he is the primary beat writer for the men's basketball and baseball teams. He can be reached at cmckeever@journalstar.com

'Nebraska-Michigan Kind Of Has A Ring To It'



*Huskers excited about playing
'another big team with a lot of tradition'*

By Mike Babcock

With talk of Nebraska's impending Alamo Bowl invitation, Marques Simmons kept calling. "That's where they thought they were going," Cory Ross said on the day it was official.

"They" are the Iowa Hawkeyes, Simmons' team. And had they been matched against Nebraska in San Antonio, Texas, on Dec. 28, Ross and Simmons would

have been reunited.

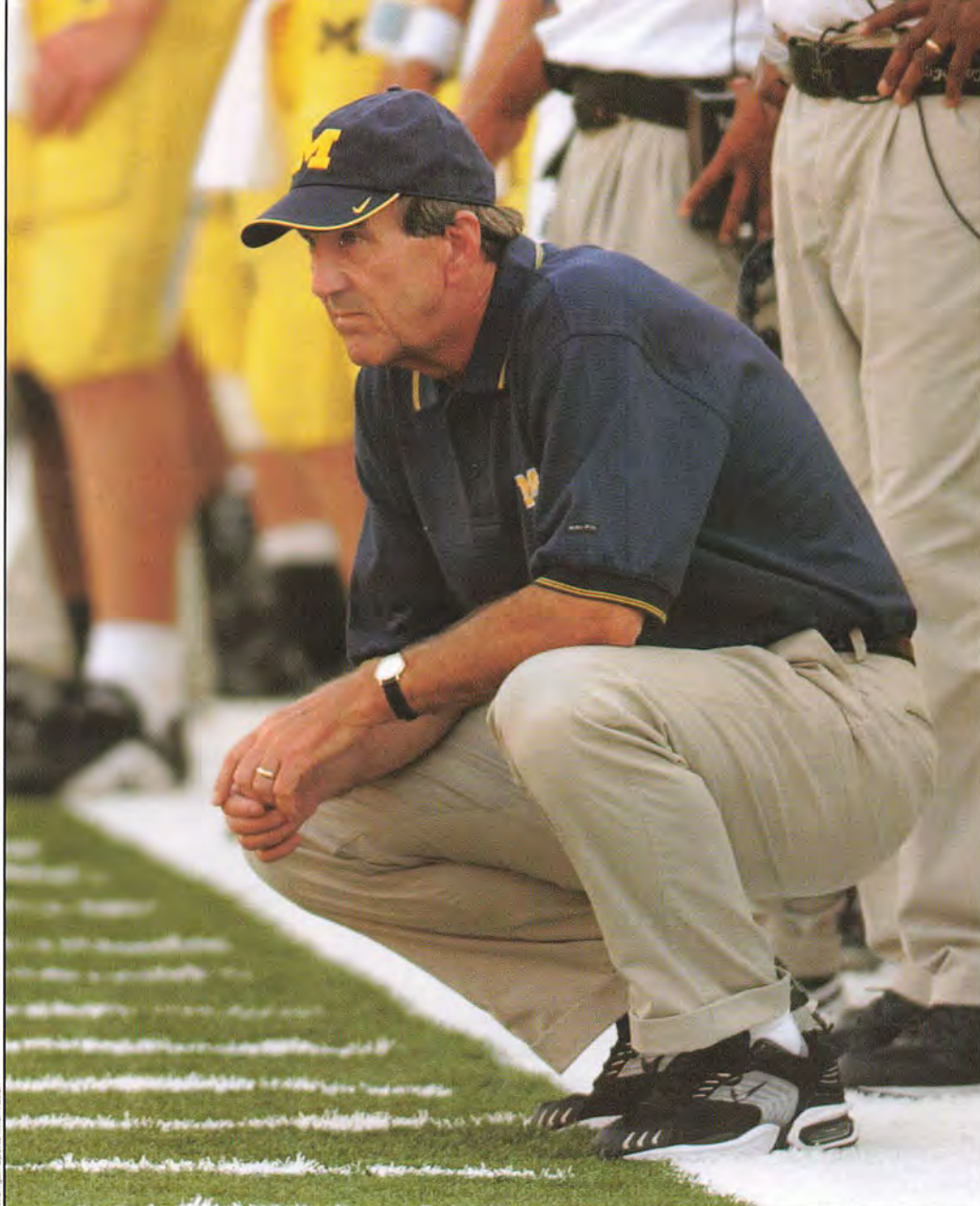
The two running backs are friends and former roommates at Nebraska. And they have maintained close contact since a frustrated Simmons transferred to

Iowa following the 2002 season.

Anyway, Simmons figured the Hawkeyes would be heading to San Antonio, too. As it turned out, however, they're going to the Outback Bowl, where they'll play Florida on Jan. 2.

But before the bids were announced, "they kept talking," said Ross. "It was fun."

Though he would have enjoyed seeing Simmons in San Antonio, Ross is excited about playing Michigan, "another big team with a lot of tradi-



Nebraska coach Bill Callahan (left) is familiar with the Michigan tradition, having coached in the Big Ten at Illinois and Wisconsin. Lloyd Carr (above) is in his 11th year at Michigan.

tion," he said. "It's going to be a big game."

Quarterback Zac Taylor also is excited about playing the Wolverines.

"Even when people were talking about us going to the Holiday Bowl and playing the Pac-10, kind of secretly I wanted to go to the Alamo Bowl and play Iowa or Michigan, one of those Big Ten teams, just because that's one of the classic match-ups," the junior from Norman, Okla., said.

"Everybody always thinks of the Big Ten having all those powerhouses. I don't think we could have been put in a better bowl game at this point in time. I think our whole team is excited."

Defensive tackle Titus Adams put it more succinctly.

FEATURE STORY

"Nebraska-Michigan kind of has a ring to it," he said.

The timbre of that ring is tradition.

Both programs are steeped in it. "You've got to play teams like that, and beat teams like that, if you want the respect you think you deserve," said Taylor.

"Obviously, we want to get Nebraska back on top, and it starts with beating teams like Michigan and Texas and USC." (Texas and USC are on the Cornhuskers' 2006 schedule.)

The Nebraska-Michigan game "will get a lot of national attention," Taylor said.

For the Cornhuskers, the Alamo Bowl is a reward for a pair of season-ending victories, including a surprisingly lopsided 30-3 upset at Colorado. For Michigan, in contrast, the game is something of a consolation prize at the end of a season that began with great expectations.

The Wolverines were ranked No. 4 nationally in the preseason in both major polls and moved up to No. 3 before losing to Notre Dame at home, in their second game, on the way to a 3-3 start. They recovered with four consecutive victories before losing at home to arch-rival Ohio State, 25-21.

Despite the 7-4 record (5-3, Big Ten), "it's hard for me to be disappointed in a group of people who showed great grit and determination,



Zac Taylor 6-2/210/Jr.

Games	Comp.	Att.	Int.	Pct.	Yds.	TD
11	223	399	10	55.9	2,486	16

toughness, passion and resilience," Michigan coach Lloyd Carr said following the Ohio State loss. "In those areas, this team met the challenge."

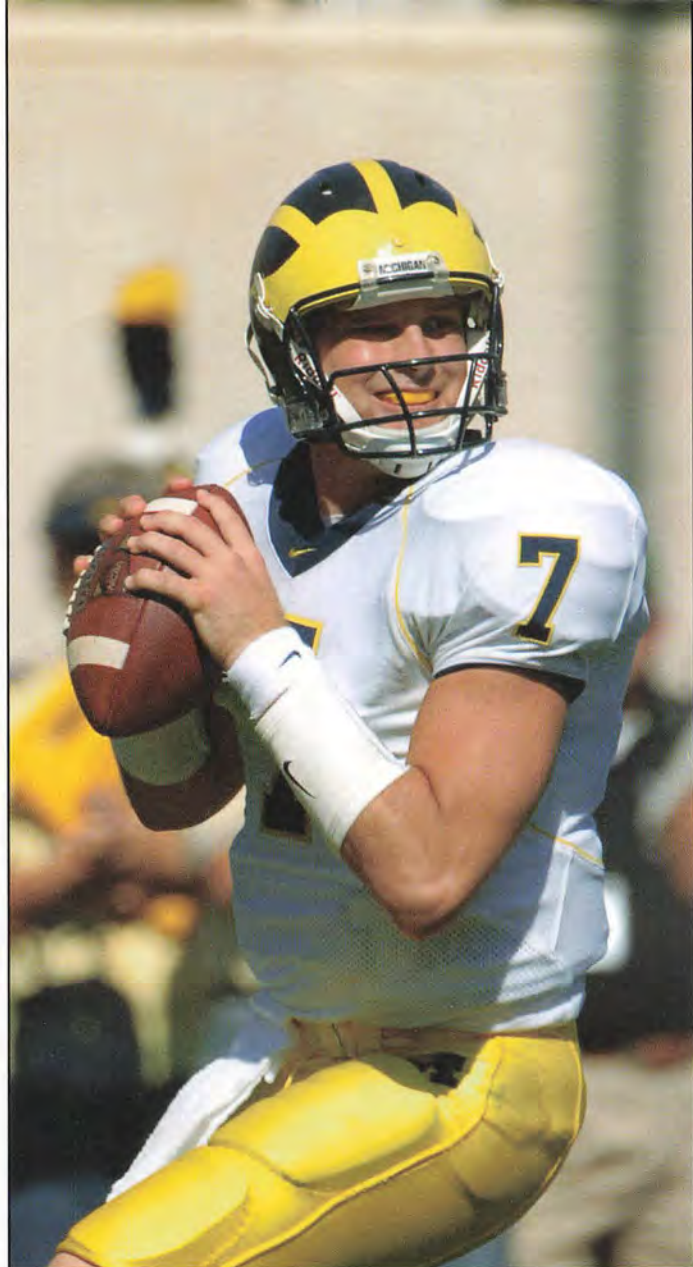
The Wolverines handed No. 3-ranked Penn State its only loss and were a handful of plays from a BCS bowl bid. Their most lopsided loss was by seven points, against Notre Dame.

Wisconsin and Minnesota defeated them by identical scores, 23-20.

Cornhusker coach Bill Callahan is familiar with Michigan's tradition, having coached in the Big Ten at Illinois and Wisconsin. Six of his assistants also have coached in the Big Ten, including defensive coordinator Kevin Cosgrove, Wisconsin's defensive coordinator from 1995 to 2003.

The Wolverines' offense relies on both physicality and finesse, according to Cosgrove. "We'll see a lot of two-back sets when they want to run the power (plays)," he said.

"Power's always been their favorite play, power and



Chad Henne 6-2/225/So.

Games	Comp.	Att.	Int.	Pct.	Yds.	TD
11	202	339	7	59.6	2,256	20

'iso.' You see it over and over again. But they've become a finesse team, where they're going to try to spread you out, 'formation' you to death, shift the tight ends and do those types of things to try to get you out of sync."

Sophomore quarterback Chad Henne directs the offense, behind a massive offensive line, anchored by a pair of first-team All-Big Ten players: tackle Adam Stenavich and guard Matt Lentz, both fifth-year seniors. Guard Leo Henige, also a fifth-year senior, was second-team all-conference.

The interior line starters all weigh 300 pounds or more, and that's without 6-foot-7, 330-pound junior tackle Jake Long, who suffered a season-ending foot injury in the Ohio State game.

Michigan has "always had big, physical offensive linemen," said Callahan. "They've built their program on a physical basis, and it starts with the offensive line and defensive line. They're big, square, long-armed, physical, athletic linemen, the kind any program would love to



As a sophomore, Cory Ross carried 37 times for 138 yards and two touchdowns as Nebraska defeated Michigan State 17-3 under interim head coach Bo Pelini in the 2003 Alamo Bowl.

have."

All-Big Ten nose tackle Gabe Watson stands 6-4 and weighs 331 pounds. Defensive tackle Pat Massey is 6-8 and 283 pounds. "I've never seen a d-lineman that big, so I can't wait to see what he looks like," Ross said. "They're physical. I know that their d-line is serious, real serious."

Senior Jason Avant is a serious wide receiver, at 6-1 and 213 pounds. He has caught 74 passes for 936 yards and eight touchdowns. "He's a big-time receiver," said Cosgrove, who tried to recruit Avant to Wisconsin. "I know he's got tremendous speed, strong hands. He's a big, thick receiver."

Michigan's top ball carriers are sophomore Mike Hart (588 yards, 4 touchdowns), who was slowed by

injury throughout the season, and freshman Kevin Grady (466 yards, 5 touchdowns).

The Wolverines will be playing in a 31st consecutive bowl game, the nation's longest current streak. Two years ago, Nebraska had that distinction when they went to San Antonio to play Michigan State in the Alamo Bowl — the Cornhuskers' 35th consecutive bowl game.

Ross carried 37 times for 138 yards and two touchdowns in a 17-3 victory under interim coach Bo Pelini. "It was the option attack then, so it was run, run, run," Ross said.

Whether by run or by pass, he and the other underclassmen wanted the game to be one the seniors could remember. "It's kind of like the same thing going on now," he said. "We

seniors want to win, and I'm pretty sure the young guys want to get us out of here with a victory."

Nebraska has always gotten out of the Alamodome with victories. The Cornhuskers defeated Big Ten co-champion Northwestern 66-17 in the 2000 Alamo Bowl game, and they won two Big 12 championship games there, 22-6 against Texas in 1999 and 54-15 against Texas A&M in 1998.

Nebraska recovered from a three-game losing streak to finish strong. "Midway through the season, when we were slumping, we didn't know what our post-season would look like, and really even going to the K-State game, we didn't know what our chances would be to go to a good bowl," Taylor said.

Against Colorado, in particular,



Nebraska fans enjoyed themselves at the 2003 Alamo Bowl (above), and NU sold its initial allotment of 10,880 tickets in less than a week for this year's game at the Alamodome (below).



"we played as well as we could have played and we got a big reward," he said. "So we'll try to make the most of this opportunity."

The Colorado victory, coupled with a Kansas upset of Iowa State, enhanced the Cornhuskers' bowl prospects and resurrected fan enthusiasm for holiday travel. Nebraska's allotment of 10,880 tickets was sold in less than a week after the Alamo Bowl bid and more tickets were secured.

"I think a lot of people around the country will tune in for this game because of all the great players in the past and all the championships both teams have combined to win," said Taylor. "It's just a great match-up. We couldn't be more excited with who we get to play and where we play it at."

It might have been more fun for Ross with Iowa, and Simmons. But "the Alamo Bowl is going to be a fun one," he said. "It was fun the last time I was there." ■

Alamo Bowl

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Five Previous Meetings

Nebraska and Michigan are among the most tradition-rich programs in college football history. Michigan has won more games than any other NCAA Division I-A program, 848, while Nebraska ranks fourth, with 793 victories — only one of which has been at Michigan's expense.

The teams have played only five times previously.

Michigan 31, Nebraska 0 Ann Arbor, Mich., Oct. 21, 1905

Interest was such that downtown Lincoln came to a standstill as the game's progress was reported in bulletins announced outside of businesses on O Street. One businessman used a megaphone in an attempt to be heard above the crowd.

For those who couldn't hear, a football was suspended on a rope spanning the street and moved along the rope in either direction to indicate field position, according to the Sunday State Journal. Mostly, the ball moved toward the end representing Nebraska's goal line.

After managing a scoreless first half, coach Walter C. "Bummy" Booth's Cornhuskers (officially given that nickname just five years earlier) couldn't contain Michigan, which hadn't lost a game since the 1900 season. The Wolverines of coach Fielding "Hurry Up" Yost were 48-0-1 since then and had earned the nickname "Point-a-Minute" for their lopsided victories.

Their unbeaten streak would end with a 2-0 loss to the University of Chicago in the final game of 1905, for a record of 55-1-1 over five seasons and a scoring disparity of 2,821 to 42.

A young Yost had come from Ohio Wesleyan to coach Nebraska for one season, in 1898, before moving on to Kansas. Booth's team would finish the 1905 season with an 8-2 record.

The Cornhuskers' other loss came a month later at Minnesota, by 35-0.

Nebraska 6, Michigan 6 Lincoln, Neb., Nov. 25, 1911

An overflow crowd estimated at 11,000 watched coach E.O. "Jumbo" Stiehm's first Nebraska team play Michigan to a tie at Nebraska Field, or as the Sunday State Journal reported, "humble the mighty Wolverines."

The grandstand of the field, which ran east and west just to the south of Memorial Stadium, held fewer than

3,000, and bleachers were taxed as well.

Governor Chester H. Aldrich, one of several state and local celebrities in attendance, tossed the ball at mid-field, ceremonially, prior to the 2:30 p.m. kickoff.

As was typical of Stiehm's teams, the Cornhuskers overmatched physically, outweighed by an average of a half-dozen pounds per man in the line. Leonard Purdy scored Nebraska's touchdown in the third quarter, after Michigan had scored on a blocked kick. Touchdowns still were worth five points in 1911, with a one-point conversion. That was changed to six beginning in 1912.

Nebraska might have won if not for a controversial call by an official at the end of the first quarter. The Cornhuskers crossed the goal line on the play, but referee Ted Stewart had blown his whistle to signal that time had elapsed in the period, nullifying the play.

Stewart, who had played at Michigan and served as an assistant at Nebraska according to the Sunday State Journal, was in Lincoln to cover the game for a Denver newspaper. But he was enlisted as the referee when Stiehm and Michigan's Yost couldn't agree on anyone else to serve in that capacity. The teams would finish with identical 5-1-2 records that season.

Michigan 20, Nebraska 0 Ann Arbor, Mich., Oct. 27, 1917

Yost, whose conservative, field-position approach was described as "punt, pass and pray," had the Wolverines rolling again when Nebraska visited 18,000-seat Ferry Field. They were 5-0 and had shut out three opponents, including rival Michigan State in the previous game 27-0.

The Nebraska shutout would be the second of four in a row before the Wolverines lost their final two games of the season, at Pennsylvania and at Northwestern.

Despite outscoring their first three opponents 154-0, E.J. "Doc" Stewart's Cornhuskers were overmatched by Michigan and fared worse than their host in less-than-ideal weather conditions, which produced a muddy field and a slippery football.

Michigan's first touchdown came

when Cornhusker halfback Elmer Schellenberg lost control of the ball on a carry deep in Wolverine territory and it popped into the hands of Michigan's Gerald Froemke, who ran 85 yards, untouched, for the score.

The Wolverines befuddled Nebraska's defense with what a newspaper account described as "old tricks," including a Statue of Liberty play on which a Michigan player would cock his arm as if to pass and halfback Archie Weston would take the ball and run with it.

The play worked every time, the newspaper reported.

Nebraska recovered to win its next two games by a combined 65-3 before finishing with a 10-9 loss against Syracuse. The season was Stewart's second and last. He would leave for military service in World War I.

Nebraska 25, Michigan 13 Ann Arbor, Mich., Sept. 29, 1962

Don Bryant, sports editor of the Lincoln Star, predicted the score exactly. The catch was, he picked Michigan to win. "I think Nebraska could win," he wrote in his column on the day before the game. "But there are too many things against the Scarlets to make them favorites."

Cornhusker coach Bob Devaney knew differently, however. He and his assistants had focused on the Michigan game from the time preseason practice began. It represented an opportunity to earn national respect at the expense of a Wolverine team hit hard by graduation.

That Michigan was favored by two touchdowns was mostly because of its membership in the Big Ten, a more prestigious conference than the Big Eight at the time. In addition, Nebraska had a game's experience, albeit against South Dakota (53-0), while Michigan had yet to play.

The game was a homecoming for Devaney, who grew up in Saginaw, Mich., and spent four seasons as an assistant under Duffy Daugherty at arch-rival Michigan State.

Devaney's parents were in the stands at 101,000-seat Michigan Stadium, which was barely half full, as were nine members of the Michigan team that had defeated Nebraska in 1917.

The availability of Cornhusker co-captain Bill Thornton was uncertain

because of a dislocated shoulder suffered three weeks earlier. The senior fullback was included on the 40-player travel squad, and a decision on whether he would play would be made at game time, Devaney said.

Thornton entered the game at the start of the second quarter and scored three touchdowns in what turned out to be one of the most significant victories in Cornhusker history.

Michigan would win only twice in nine games and finish last in the Big Ten.

Michigan 27, Nebraska 23 Tempe, Ariz., Jan. 1, 1986

If not for the third quarter of the Fiesta Bowl game, Nebraska would have evened the series with Michigan. But Cornhusker running backs coach Frank Solich told reporters the third quarter was the "most disastrous" he had ever seen, and offensive tackle Tom Welter used a movie reference in describing what happened. It was like the "Nightmare on Elm Street."

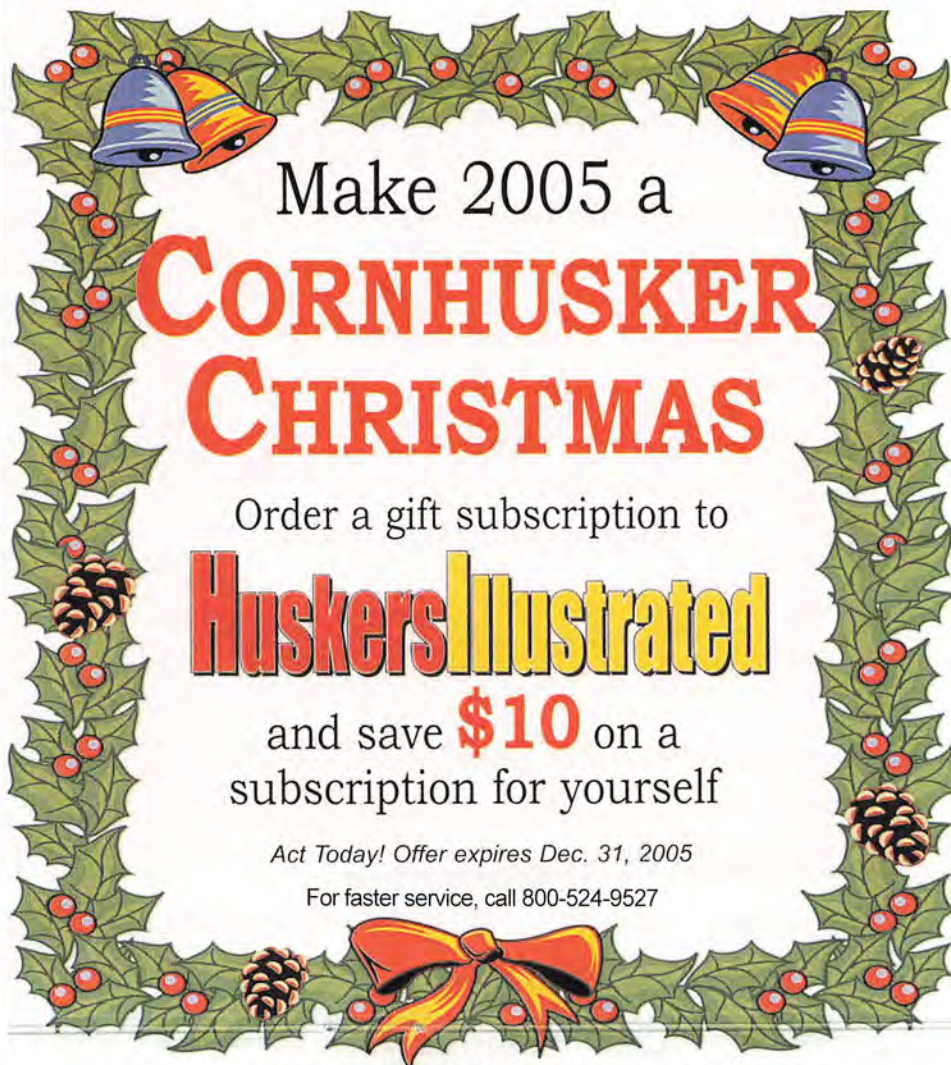
Nebraska led 14-3 at halftime, but trailed 27-14 at the end of the third quarter. And an inability to take care of the ball was a significant factor in the Cornhuskers' demise.

Nebraska's first two possessions of the third quarter ended in fumbles, the first at its own 21-yard line, the second at its own 38-yard line. Michigan converted both into touchdowns. And in just over 2 minutes on the game clock, the Cornhuskers found themselves behind.

Nebraska's third possession of the half ended with a blocked punt. Though Michigan took possession at the Cornhusker 6-yard line, it had to settle for a field goal. But the defensive stand was of little consolation. The Wolverines would add a third touchdown with 1:53 remaining in the quarter, on a seven-play, 52-yard drive helped along by a pair of pass interference penalties.

True freshman quarterback Steve Taylor came off the bench to rally Nebraska, directing a 12-play, 77-yard touchdown drive, which he finished with 2:29 remaining.

Michigan took a safety from its 4-yard line a minute later, but Taylor's desperation pass was intercepted in the end zone with 28 seconds on the clock to end a frustrating season that saw Nebraska recover from an opening-game loss to Florida State and climb to No. 2 in the Associated Press poll, only to lose at Oklahoma 27-7 in the final regular-season game. ■



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2005 RESULTS

1	Sept. 3	Maine (5-6), W 25-7	1-0
2	Sept. 10	Wake Forest (4-7), W 31-3	2-0
3	Sept. 17	Pittsburgh (5-6), W 7-6	3-0
4	Oct. 1	Iowa St. (4-4/7-4), W 27-20, 2 ot	1-0/4-0
5	Oct. 8	Texas Tech (6-2/9-2), L 34-31	1-1/4-1
6	Oct. 15	@Baylor (2-6/5-6), W 23-14	2-1/5-1
7	Oct. 22	@Missouri (4-4/6-5), L 41-24	2-2/5-2
8	Oct. 29	Oklahoma (6-2/7-4), L 31-24	2-3/5-3
9	Nov. 5	@Kansas (3-5/6-5), L 40-15	2-4/5-4
10	Nov. 12	Kansas State (2-6/5-6), W 27-25	3-4/6-4
11	Nov. 25	@Colorado (5-3/7-5), W 30-3	4-4/7-4
12	Dec. 28	vs. Michigan (7-4), 7 p.m., ESPN, Alamo Bowl	

BIG 12 CONFERENCE AT A GLANCE

FINAL STANDINGS

North

	Conf.	All
Colorado	5 3	7 5
Iowa State	4 4	7 4
Nebraska	4 4	7 4
Missouri	4 4	6 5
Kansas	3 5	6 5
Kansas State	2 6	5 6

South

	Conf.	All
Texas	9 0	12 0
Texas Tech	6 2	9 2
Oklahoma	6 2	7 4
Texas A&M	3 5	5 6
Baylor	2 6	5 6
Oklahoma State	1 7	4 7

Saturday, Dec. 3 Big 12 Championship, Houston, Texas

Texas 70, Colorado 3

BOWL SCHEDULE (All times Central)

Friday, Dec. 23

Fort Worth Bowl, Fort Worth, Texas
Kansas (6-5) vs. Houston (6-5), ESPN, 7 p.m.

Tuesday, Dec. 27

Champs Sports Bowl, Orlando, Fla.

Colorado (7-5) vs. Clemson (7-4), ESPN, 4 p.m.

Wednesday, Dec. 28

Alamo Bowl, San Antonio, Texas

Nebraska (7-4) vs. Michigan (7-4), ESPN, 7 p.m.

Thursday, Dec. 29

Holiday Bowl, San Diego, Calif.

Oklahoma (7-4) vs. Oregon (10-1), ESPN, 7 p.m.

Friday, Dec. 30

Independence Bowl, Shreveport, La.

Missouri (6-5) vs. South Carolina (7-4), ESPN, 2:30 p.m.

Saturday, Dec. 31

Houston Bowl, Houston, Texas

Iowa State (7-4) vs. TCU (10-1), ESPN2, 1:30 p.m.

Monday, Jan. 2

Cotton Bowl, Dallas, Texas

Texas Tech (9-2) vs. Alabama (9-2), FOX, 10 a.m.

Wednesday, Jan. 4

Rose Bowl, Pasadena, Calif.

Texas (12-0) vs. USC (12-0), ABC, 7 p.m.

GAME 12

Michigan Dec. 28

Location: Ann Arbor, Mich.

Enrollment: 25,467

2005 record: 7-4

Coach: Lloyd Carr, 11th year

Series: Michigan leads 3-1-1



7 p.m. (CST), ESPN

Alamodome, San Antonio, Texas

Quick Facts

Michigan is making its NCAA-leading 31st consecutive bowl appearance and 37th overall trip. Nebraska had that distinction before its streak ended a year ago after 35 straight bowl games. NU is making its 43rd bowl appearance.

The last time the Wolverines failed to earn a January bowl berth came in Lloyd Carr's first year at Michigan when the Wolverines lost to Texas A&M in the Alamo Bowl following the 1995 season.

This will be the sixth meeting between the Wolverines and Huskers, with U-M holding a 3-1-1 advantage. Michigan defeated Nebraska 27-23 in 1986 Fiesta Bowl, the last meeting between the two schools and the only previous match-up during the bowl season.

Wolverine to Watch

Senior wide receiver Jason Avant was voted the Bo Schembechler most valuable player by his teammates. A first-team All-Big Ten Conference selection, Avant led the



Wolverines with career highs in receptions (74), receiving yards (936) and receiving touchdowns (eight). He is second in the Big Ten in receptions and third in

receiving yards and ranks among the top 25 nationally in every major receiving category.

2005 Results

(Michigan 7-4)

Sept. 3 Northern Illinois, W 33-17
Sept. 10 Notre Dame, L 17-10
Sept. 17 Eastern Michigan, W 55-0
Sept. 24 @Wisconsin, L 23-20
Oct. 1 @Michigan St., W 34-31 (ot)
Oct. 8 Minnesota, L 23-20
Oct. 15 Penn State, W 27-25
Oct. 22 @Iowa, W 23-20 (ot)
Oct. 29 @Northwestern, W 33-17
Nov. 12 Indiana, W 41-14
Nov. 19 Ohio State, L 25-21
Dec. 28 vs. Nebraska (Alamo Bowl)

TENTATIVE 2-DEEPS

NEBRASKA OFFENSE

XWR	87	Nate Swift	6-2	195	RFr.
	7	Frantz Hardy	6-0	175	So.
LT	76	Lydon Murtha	6-7	315	RFr.
	54	Chris Patrick	6-4	285	So.
LG	65	Greg Austin**	6-1	290	Jr.
	73	Jared Helming*	6-3	295	Sr.
C	50	Kurt Mann*	6-4	290	Jr.
	65	Greg Austin**	6-1	290	Jr.
RG	75	Brandon Koch**	6-4	310	Sr.
	61	Mike Huff	6-4	300	RFr.
RT	70	Matt Slauson	6-5	340	Fr.
	74	Newton Lingenfelter	6-4	280	Jr.
TE	85	J.B. Phillips*	6-3	255	So.
	81	Josh Mueller*	6-5	265	So.
ZWR	83	Terrence Nunn*	6-0	190	So.
	9	Mark LeFlore***	5-11	195	Sr.
QB	13	Zac Taylor	6-2	210	Jr.
	3	Harrison Beck	6-2	210	Fr.
FB	41	Dane Todd**	5-10	235	Jr.
	33	Grant Miller	6-0	225	Jr.
IB	4	Cory Ross***	5-6	195	Sr.
	20	Marlon Lucky	6-0	210	Fr.
PK	29	Jordan Congdon	5-11	180	Fr.

NEBRASKA DEFENSE

DE	44	Jay Moore*	6-4	270	Jr.
	55	Wali Muhammad	6-1	255	Sr.
DT	66	Le Kevin Smith***	6-2	305	Sr.
	54	Ola Dagunduro	6-2	290	Jr.
RT	96	Titus Adams***	6-3	300	Sr.
	94	Barry Cryer	6-2	275	Jr.
DE	90	Adam Carriker**	6-6	280	Jr.
	89	Kevin Luhrs	6-1	255	So.
SLB	49	Adam Ickes*	6-2	225	Sr.
	45	Nick Covey	6-2	225	Fr.
MLB	13	Corey McKeon	6-1	225	So.
	38	Phillip Dillard	6-2	250	Fr.
WLB	51	Bo Ruud*	6-3	230	So.
	40	Lance Brandenburg*	6-1	230	So.
LCB	2	Cortney Grixby*	5-9	165	So.
	30	Tierre Green*	6-1	200	So.
FS	25	Blake Tiedtke*	5-10	190	Sr.
	4	Tyler Fisher	5-11	195	Sr.
SS	14	Daniel Bullocks***	6-2	210	Sr.
	8	Andrew Shanle**	6-1	205	Jr.
RCB	1	Zackary Bowman	6-2	190	Jr.
	30	Tierre Green*	6-1	200	So.
P	37	Sam Koch**	6-1	225	Sr.

MICHIGAN OFFENSE

WR	15	Steve Breaston**	6-1	178	Sr.
	86	Mario Manningham	6-0	183	Fr.
LT	79	Adam Stenavich***	6-5	321	Sr.
	73	Alex Mitchell*	6-7	323	Sr.
LG	72	Rueben Riley*	6-4	311	Sr.
	73	Alex Mitchell*	6-7	323	Sr.
C	57	Adam Kraus*	6-6	307	Jr.
	54	Mark Bihl**	6-5	303	Jr.
RG	67	Matt Lentz***	6-6	311	Sr.
	73	Alex Mitchell*	6-7	323	Sr.
RT	77	Jake Long	6-7	330	Jr.
	72	Rueben Riley*	6-4	311	Sr.
TE	88	Tim Massaquoi***	6-4	252	Sr.
	89	Tyler Ecker**	6-6	251	Sr.
WR	8	Jason Avant**	6-1	213	Sr.
	17	Carl Tabb**	6-2	196	Sr.
QB	7	Chad Henne*	6-2	226	So.
	12	Mark Gutierrez**	6-4	231	Sr.
FB	34	Will Paul*	6-3	261	Jr.
	35	Brian Thompson**	6-2	237	Fr.
TB	20	Mike Hart*	5-9	193	So.
	3	Kevin Grady	5-9	227	Fr.
PK	38	Garrett Rivas**	5-9	216	Jr.

MICHIGAN DEFENSE

RLB	56	LaMarr Woodley**	6-2	274	Jr.
	99	Pierre Woods***	6-5	249	Sr.
NT	78	Gabe Watson***	6-4	331	Sr.
	67	Terrance Taylor	6-0	301	Fr.
DT	94	Pat Massey***	6-8	283	Sr.
	97	Will Johnson	6-5	291	So.
DE	80	Alan Branch*	6-6	311	So.
	91	Rondell Biggs**	6-3	270	Sr.
OLB	6	Prescott Burgess**	6-3	243	Jr.
	2	Shawn Crable*	6-5	247	Jr.
ILB	45	Dave Harris	6-2	251	Sr.
	49	John Thompson	6-1	229	So.
ILB	37	Chris Graham*	5-11	224	So.
	26	Scott McClintock***	6-2	244	Jr.
LCB	39	Leon Hall**	5-11	194	Jr.
	14	Morgan Trent	6-0	190	So.
FS	19	Willis Barringer**	6-0	207	Sr.
	27	Brandon Harrison	5-9	199	Fr.
SS	31	Branden Englemont*	5-11	202	Jr.
	22	Jamar Adams*	6-2	208	So.
RCB	13	Grant Mason*	6-0	192	Sr.
	4	Darnell Hood**	5-11	193	Sr.
P	3	Ross Ryan	6-1	206	Sr.

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NEBRASKA vs. MICHIGAN



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PICKS

Brian Hill
Editor

Nebraska has played well (versus Iowa State and Colorado) when it has had extra time to prepare for an opponent. But will a month be too long to maintain the momentum from two straight wins to end the regular season? Possibly, but the extra practice time could be a huge benefit for a young team. If the Huskers can play with emotion, avoid a slow start and keep their mistakes to a minimum, they should have an excellent shot against a good team completing a disappointing season.
Nebraska 23, Michigan 20

Mike Babcock
Contributing Editor

Nebraska should have an emotional edge as a decided underdog, although that can be negligible. More to the point, the Cornhuskers should be buoyed by confidence from the Colorado victory, which showed how things can be when they're executing. If they play with similar consistency and relatively mistake-free, they'll have a shot at the upset, in a building where they've always played well.
Nebraska 25, Michigan 21

Sean Callahan
HuskersIllustrated.com

Nebraska comes to San Antonio inspired to get the win and it finds a way to

NEBRASKA Vs MICHIGAN

beat an uninspired Michigan team. This is the first non-New Year's Day bowl Michigan has played in since 1995. Zac Taylor gets the kind of protection he needs, and some of Nebraska's young players show flashes for the future in the win.
Nebraska 27, Michigan 23

Terry Douglass
Grand Island Independent

Nebraska would love nothing more than to cap the season on a high note with three consecutive victories and improve to 5-0 all-time in the Alamodome. However, winning a second consecutive game as a double-digit underdog looms as a difficult chore. So does beating Michigan in the Alamo Bowl.
Michigan 35, Nebraska 20

Michael Spath
Assistant Editor, The Wolverine

Nebraska should have the home-field advantage with a less-than-stellar turnout expected from Michigan fans. The Huskers' defensive line poses a serious problem for a U-M offensive line without at least two starters, and maybe three. However, Michigan's defense is well suited to play against a pro-style offense, especially one that struggles to run the football. The Wolverines offense will benefit from quarterback Chad Henne, who is coming off his best performance of the season.
Michigan 28, Nebraska 21

10 QUESTIONS

with **MATT SLAUSON**

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Colorado Springs, Colo.

When opportunity knocked, Matt Slauson was there to open the door. "I'm doing all right," he said following an early bowl practice in Lincoln. "I think I've made some strides."

His opportunity was a result of an injury to senior Seppo Evwaraye during the Kansas game. With Evwaraye sidelined, Slauson stepped in as the starter at right tackle.

Slauson was a late addition to the Cornhuskers' scholarship recruiting class, and his goal was to make the traveling squad. He did that by working his way onto the second team, which put him in position to fill in for Evwaraye. "I thought I did a pretty good job of filling my role," he said.

He has come a long way since the beginning of training camp. The first time he went against junior Adam Carriker during practice, for example, the first-team, All-Big 12 defensive end "picked me up and threw me into the quarterback, like 'Welcome to Nebraska,'" said Slauson.

He never expected to be starting as a true freshman, a rarity in the Cornhuskers' offensive line.

If you were allowed to eat only one thing for a month, what would it be?

"Chipotle burritos. Chipotle is the name of a restaurant. It was started in Denver by a kid who was making burritos for all his buddies, and he turned it into a little restaurant. I go there quite often, twice a week."

Bungee jumping, rock climbing or sky diving?

"Sky diving. I think that would be a rush but I also don't think I'd be able to do it because they don't make chutes big enough."

If you were on "Star Search," what would your talent be?

"Probably playing the trumpet, I suppose. I actually played the trumpet for our students when they came and watched us, right after fall camp. After that, our team had dinner with the band, and I grabbed a trumpet and started messing around with it. I got to play on the news. I've been playing the trumpet about nine years now, a while."

What's the best thing served at the training table?

"Philly cheesesteaks, they are really good. I like those. They serve them once a week, maybe twice a week if I'm lucky."

If you could excel at another sport besides football at the collegiate level, what sport would it be?

"Probably track. I won state in Colorado my senior year, threw (the shot put) over 60 feet. So that was all right. I threw 56 feet with a college shot as a senior, and I didn't have any coaching or anything. So I suppose it would be track. I wasn't very consistent with the discus."



What's the best movie you've ever seen?

"Oh man, I can't do this with (associate head trainer) Doak (Ostergard) standing there. He's going to make fun of me. 'The Notebook,' it's a love story, with Rachel McAdams and some other dude; I don't know. It's really good. It came out last year, the year before. I've seen it many times. When I first came here, I used to watch it a couple of times a week. I'd borrow it from a friend. All of the guys give me a hard time about it. When it first came out, I wanted to see it really, really bad because it looked really good. None of my friends wanted to see it with me. When it came out on video, I watched it when I was at the prep school and just cried like a baby."

If you had only three CDs to which you could listen, what would they be?

"Ronnie Milsap, Greatest Hits, Johnny Cash, Greatest Hits, and the third one, Rammstein."

Who's the funniest guy on the team?

"Man, I'd say like (freshman quarterback) Harrison Beck because he's crazy."

Which is harder, run-blocking or pass-blocking?

"Pass-blocking because it's a little more finesse. It's all about balance and leverage. Run-blocking is all about strength. You can just go off and blow somebody up, but when you're dropping back on a pass set, if you're off-balance a little bit, then they can cut one way and you're in trouble there."

What's the most difficult part of the transition from high school to college football?

"I'd have to say just the level of players. The speed of the game isn't really a problem for me. It's just that everybody's good here. When you're on the first team, you're going up against the Jay Moores, the (Adam) Carrikers, the Walis (Muhammad). Their speed and strength, it's all put together and it makes things a little difficult. With that, it's hard to take a play off because you're going to get beat real bad. I was totally expecting that. I was expecting to get my butt whipped all year. And I have been." ■

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Turning Point

Ex-Husker Kirby says Devaney's arrival made football seem sane again

By Mike Babcock

When Nebraska offered a football scholarship, John Kirby accepted without hesitation, and not just because he grew up not far from Lincoln on a farm near David City, Neb.

Sure, he was familiar with the Cornhuskers of coach Bill Jennings. But even if he hadn't been, he would have accepted the offer. He had no choice. His parents decided for him.

"When Nebraska came and said, 'We want to talk to your son about playing football,' that really closed the door on all the other schools," Kirby said. "That was pretty much it."

College football or not, he was still a farmhand. And he needed to be close enough to get home on weekends to help with chores — even weekends when Nebraska played games.

David City was on a bus route between Norfolk, Columbus and Lincoln, Kirby said, and buses ran every day of the week, including Sunday. So when the Cornhuskers played a home game on Saturday afternoon, he would go home with his parents if they attended the game or take a bus if they didn't.

Many students rode buses back to Lincoln on Sunday nights in the early 1960s. "It was a whole different lifestyle," said Kirby, who earned letters in 1961, 1962 and 1963 as a line-backer on defense and a guard on



John Kirby was inducted into the Nebraska High School Hall of Fame in September.

offense in the NCAA's one-platoon system, which ended after the 1964 season.

Bob Devaney, Nebraska's coach for Kirby's final two seasons, had no problem with the trips. "He would let you know that 'country bumpkins' needed to take care of home," Kirby said.

"That's the way he put it. He would say that."

Devaney meant no offense with the "country bumpkins" comment. And Kirby took none. If not for Devaney, he probably would have

quit football after his sophomore season.

In an attempt to turn the program around, Jennings had taken the fun out of the game with interminable practices, two and three hours long or longer. Sometimes Jennings' physical practices would continue well into the evening, beneath floodlights mounted on the NU Coliseum.

The players hit and hit and hit, even throughout the weeks before games. Jennings' idea of a short-yardage drill was having a running back, Rudy Johnson or Willie Ross, try to gain 2 yards against a defense that included more than 11 players — a lot more than 11. If the back didn't pick up the yardage, everyone on the offense had to circle the baseball field adjacent to the football practice field. And if the back got the yardage, all of the defensive players had to run. "It was hell," said Kirby.

When the grueling practices finally ended, the players still had to study.

The team was 4-6 in 1960, when he was a freshman, and 3-6-1 in 1961. By then, "most of us hated football," Kirby said. "If Devaney wouldn't have showed up when he did, there would have been a lot of us exiting. So it's a good thing Jennings did leave. It would have been chaos."

Devaney came from Wyoming to bring order out of that potential chaos. He told the players that practices would rarely exceed an hour and a half and that once the season started, they wouldn't be hitting constantly during practice. He promised that, said Kirby. And he was true to his word.

He wasn't going to leave every-

thing on the practice field. It would be saved for the games.

Often, Devaney began practices by telling jokes. Suddenly, football was fun.

"Bob Devaney made it sane again," Kirby said.

He also convinced the players they could win. Kirby remembers a comment Devaney made before he arrived in Lincoln "He said, 'I don't know why Nebraska's not winning. They're big. They're fast. They've got talent. Something is wrong,'" said Kirby. "That's one of the reasons he came."

Devaney was convinced he could be successful at Nebraska. Duffy Daugherty, who had endorsed him for the job and for whom he had been an assistant at Michigan State, told him he could win a national championship at Nebraska, something he could never do at Wyoming.

Jennings wasn't a dynamic recruiter, according to Kirby. He was "a very quiet, reserved man, not a conversationalist." But he surrounded himself with good recruiters, Kirby said, and attracted more talent than his 15-34-1 record over five seasons at Nebraska would indicate.

The Cornhuskers were 19-3 in Devaney's first two seasons, with players recruited primarily by Jennings and his staff. Those first two teams included a dozen players who were NFL draft picks, among them Bob Brown and Lloyd Voss, first-round selections in 1964.

Voss, who came from Magnolia, Minn., was the first player Kirby met as a freshman. "I said, 'What am I doing here? This is crazy.' I knew I was going to be slaughtered," said Kirby.

Even at 6-foot-2 and 230 pounds, he was considerably smaller than Voss.

"We had huge people. And they could run," he said.

Kirby came from St. Mary's High School in David City, where he was a multi-sport athlete — he was inducted into the Nebraska High School Hall of Fame in September — and never thought a lot about playing college football until his senior year, when the Cornhuskers first contacted him.

Recruiting was nothing compared to now. "Back then, you might get a

letter about the second week of football (as a senior) if you won your first game and you had any size," he said.

When such a letter came, an athlete would go to the school library and read whatever he could find about the team in sports-related magazines with names like "Scholastic Athlete."

Television offered a college game or two and one NFL game a week, said Kirby.

The NFL was even more foreign to him. So when he learned the Minnesota Vikings had taken him in the fifth round of the 1964 draft, "my parents, our whole household, didn't really understand," he said. "Then, when we kind of realized what was going on, we still didn't believe it."

He would play seven professional seasons as a linebacker with the Vikings and New York Giants and never took the opportunity for granted. As a rookie in training camp, he would get up at 6 a.m. and while he was shaving before breakfast, wonder out loud if he would be there the next day.

Nebraska remained his home. Except for when he was in the NFL

and a brief stint in military service, he has never been away from Nebraska for more than a month at a time, he said. The last 22 years, he has worked for Vishay Dale Electronics in Columbus. He and wife Mary Sue still live in David City.

He was part of the Cornhusker teams that resurrected the tradition coach Bill Callahan is trying to re-establish now. And a key game in that resurrection was a 25-13 victory at Michigan in 1962, though "we didn't know what it really meant until the following year," he said. "It was highly significant."

"Michigan was the game that probably set it off, and going to that first stupid bowl in New York (the 1962 Gotham Bowl) was probably a very large stepping stone that we didn't know anything about, too. But the following year when we walked into camp as seniors, my class, we had all the confidence and camaraderie about everything it took to get to the next level."

He made a good decision in accepting a scholarship from Nebraska — or rather, his parents did. ■

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JUCO Linemen Give NU Depth

**2006 class will
have junior
college flavor**

By Doug Horwich



Victory Haines of Snow junior college in Ephraim, Utah, is one of two junior college tacklers who recently committed to Nebraska.

Nebraska's 2005 recruiting class saw the Huskers sign 12 junior college transfers — a dramatic departure from the days of Tom Osborne and Frank Solich in which junior college signees were rare, and many classes contained none at all.

However, a roster lacking quality depth at a number of positions and an entirely new offensive system prompted the Huskers to load up on junior college transfers last year in an attempt to shore up a number of personnel deficiencies.

In its 2006 recruiting class, Nebraska is again placing a heavy

emphasis on recruiting junior college athletes, and when the dust settles in February, the Huskers' class figures to contain roughly 10 such players — more or less 40 percent of the total players signed this year.

Clearly, this is an indication that the Husker coaches are concerned about depth at a number of positions and hope that another heavy influx of junior college transfers will go a long way toward addressing those concerns.

Of specific emphasis this year in junior college recruiting for Nebraska have been the defensive line, offensive line and secondary, as the Huskers lose both starting safeties

NEBRASKA COMMITMENTS FOR 2006

Player	Hometown (school)	Pos.	Ht.	Wt.	40
Pierre Allen	Denver, Colo. (Thomas Jefferson)	DE	6-5	222	4.6
Steve Allen	Fresno, Calif. (Fresno City College)	LB	6-2	230	4.5
Cruz Barrett	Daytona Beach, Fla. (Mainland)	OL	6-4	314	5.41
Rulon Davis	Walnut, Calif. (Mt. San Antonio College)	DL	6-6	275	4.9
Josh Freeman	Grandview, Mo.	QB	6-6	230	4.75
Victory Haines	Ephraim, Utah (Snow College)	OL	6-7	285	5.1
Ricky Henry	Omaha, Neb. (Burke)	OL	6-3	295	5.2
Menelik Holt	San Diego, Calif. (St. Augustine)	WR	6-3	210	4.78
Seth Jensen	Fort Morgan, Colo.	DT	6-3	275	4.9
Brandon Johnson	Compton, Calif. (Compton CC)	DT	6-3	312	4.8
Andre Jones	Fresno, Calif. (Fresno City College)	DB	6-0	192	4.4
D.J. Jones	Omaha, Neb. (Central)	OL	6-6	300	5.0
Ben Martin	Lincoln, Neb. (Southwest)	DE	6-4	232	5.2
Mike McNeill	Kirkwood, Mo.	TE	6-4	215	4.65
Carl Nicks	Salinas, Calif. (Hartnell CC)	OL	6-6	320	5.0
Ashlee Palmer	Compton, Calif. (Compton CC)	DB	6-3	215	4.4
Mike Smith	Las Vegas, Nev. (Palo Verde)	DE/TE	6-6	245	4.75
Anthony West	San Diego, Calif. (Point Loma)	ATH	6-0	195	4.56
Kenny Wilson	Liberal, Kan. (Butler County CC)	RB	6-0	220	4.4
Corey Young	Omaha, Neb. (Millard North)	DB	6-0	194	4.45

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from the 2005 squad, in addition to both starting defensive tackles. On the offensive line, depth is needed at the tackle positions.

A large number of junior college players have visited the Nebraska campus this year, and the Huskers have had two weekends that featured predominately junior college athletes. The first weekend in October was extremely successful, with the team receiving commitments from defensive tackle Brandon Johnson, defensive end Rulon Davis, cornerback Andre Jones and outside linebacker Steve Allen. The fifth visitor from that weekend, wide receiver Maurice Purify, appears to be leaning toward signing with the Huskers as well.

The Huskers recently played host to another group of junior college players and had similar success, receiving three commitments before the weekend was over.

One of those commitments came from offensive tackle Carl Nicks (6-foot-6, 320 pounds, 5.0-second 40-yard dash) from Hartnell Community College in Salinas, Calif.

Despite pressure to attend a university in California, Nicks found the opportunity in Lincoln too good to pass up. "To tell you the truth, it was their academic support system — it's awesome," Nicks said. "The coaches aren't too bad themselves, and the players are like a big family over there. The facilities are top of the line quality, and everything there just seems top of the line. It's like nothing I've ever seen."

Nicks also bonded with the other visitors he met during the weekend. "The other recruits there were probably one of the reasons I committed, too," he said. "I went on an official visit with Ashlee (Palmer) and 'the Beast' (Brandon Johnson) to Washington last weekend, and we all committed to Nebraska this weekend instead. And Victory (Haines) committed, too, and D.J. Jones was there on his visit."

Nicks and the other visiting recruits all got the feeling that the Huskers are on the verge of something special. "We could all see where they're going," he said. "They really look like they're going to be in the BCS and maybe the national title game in the next two years. The Nebraska players are real focused,

RECRUITING NOTES

Commitments Come Quickly

By Rick Shaw

Despite chilly temperatures outdoors, the Nebraska football recruiting momentum heated up substantially in the days following Thanksgiving. Seven athletes delivered commitments to Husker coaches during the first 11 days of December, bringing Nebraska's total number of pledges for its 2006 recruiting class to 20.

The commitments included:

● **Cruz Barrett, offensive tackle, 6-foot-4, 314 pounds, Daytona Beach, Fla. (Mainland)** — Barrett, rated the No. 60 prospect (three stars) in Florida by Rivals.com, chose the Huskers over scholarship offers from Florida State, Florida, North Carolina, Oklahoma and West Virginia.

"I knew after visiting that's where I wanted to go because of how the fans are and just the whole atmosphere up there."

● **Ben Martin, defensive lineman, 6-4, 232, Lincoln, Neb. (Southwest)** — Martin received a Nebraska offer in early December, and it didn't take him long to make the decision to spend his college years in Lincoln. Rated the No. 7 prospect in Nebraska by Rivals.com, the athletic Martin (4.8-second 40-yard dash) chose the Huskers over offers from Ohio and Colorado State, as well as heavy interest from Kansas.

"I was down there (Nebraska) for a practice, and after the practice I let coach (Bill) Callahan know that I wanted to go to Nebraska. He was really happy that I committed and was going to be a part of the program."

"When Nebraska offered me, it was one of the best things to do. It will be fun to be part of the tradition."

● **Anthony West, running back/defensive back, 6-0, 195, San Diego, Calif. (Point Loma)** — A sleeper in some recruiting circles, West caught the eye of the Husker staff with a solid performance at the Nebraska summer camp last June. At the camp, West recorded a 4.37-second (hand-timed) 40-yard dash and a 29-inch vertical jump. He went on to rush for more than 1,200 yards and 17 touchdowns as a senior.

"I talked to coach Bill Busch and coach Randy Jordan about my commitment," West said. "They're both real cool. They like my route running out of the backfield. They are losing Cory Ross, and they said that they could see me playing that position."

● **Corey Young, safety, 6-0, 194, Omaha, Neb. (Millard North)** — Young, rated the No. 6 prospect in Nebraska by Rivals.com, chose the Huskers over offers from Iowa State and Colorado State. The all-state player from Omaha helped lead Millard North to a state championship in 2005, rushing for 1,670 yards on 126 carries and scoring 23 touchdowns.

"Coach (Scott) Downing of Nebraska, by far, showed me the most love of any coach I talked to," Young said. "I feel comfortable with my decision, and I'm happy I've gotten this taken care of."

● **Victory Haines, offensive tackle, 6-7, 285, Ephraim, Utah (Snow College)** — Chose Nebraska over offers from Hawaii, New Mexico State and Duke.

● **Carl Nicks, offensive tackle, 6-6, 320, Salinas, Calif. (Hartnell Community College)** — Chose Nebraska over offers from California and Washington.

● **Ashlee Palmer, safety, 6-3, 215, Compton, Calif. (Compton Community College)** — Chose Nebraska over offers from Arizona, Oregon, Washington, USC, Arizona State, Ole Miss and Oregon State. ■

and they're working really hard. Just based on their schedule alone, it's going to be awesome playing there."

Nicks was a left tackle at the junior college level and will play that position at Nebraska. "That's what I prefer because I've been playing it over here in JUCO," he said. "I definitely want to make an immediate impact. That's one of the reasons they're bringing in the junior college guys — for depth."

Nicks also bonded with the Husker coaching staff on the visit. "That's another reason why I chose Nebraska," he said. "Coach (Dennis) Wagner is awesome. He's a good guy. And when I spent time with coach (Bill) Callahan, I felt kind of star struck."

Nicks' situation is fairly unique as he is married with a 2-year-old daughter. "My wife wasn't too happy at first that I committed before talking about it with her," he said. "She'll cope with it though. The family housing is tremendous there, and they did a real good job of showing me how much my scholarship check would be and what rent would be. They gave me all the prices, and everything fit

into place well. The family housing is 10 times better than what I expected it to be."

In addition to Nicks, the Huskers received a commitment from another offensive tackle — Victory Haines (6-7, 285, 5.1) of Snow College in Ephraim, Utah. Haines is a mid-term transfer and will join the team in January for winter conditioning. He has two years to play two.

"I had a talk with coach (Bill) Callahan, and I officially committed to Nebraska," he said. "He was excited just like me. I just want to get going. I don't think there is any other school that is going to match anymore perfect for me, and he was excited about that."

"I'm coming in for the spring," he said. "I told them when I was going through the weight room and hearing about the strength, I was telling them, 'I want to get started.' I know that is an area I need to improve in, but I know they have got the facilities and the coaches to get it done. I know I need to get stronger and put on more weight."

Haines was discovered by the Husker staff in a somewhat indirect

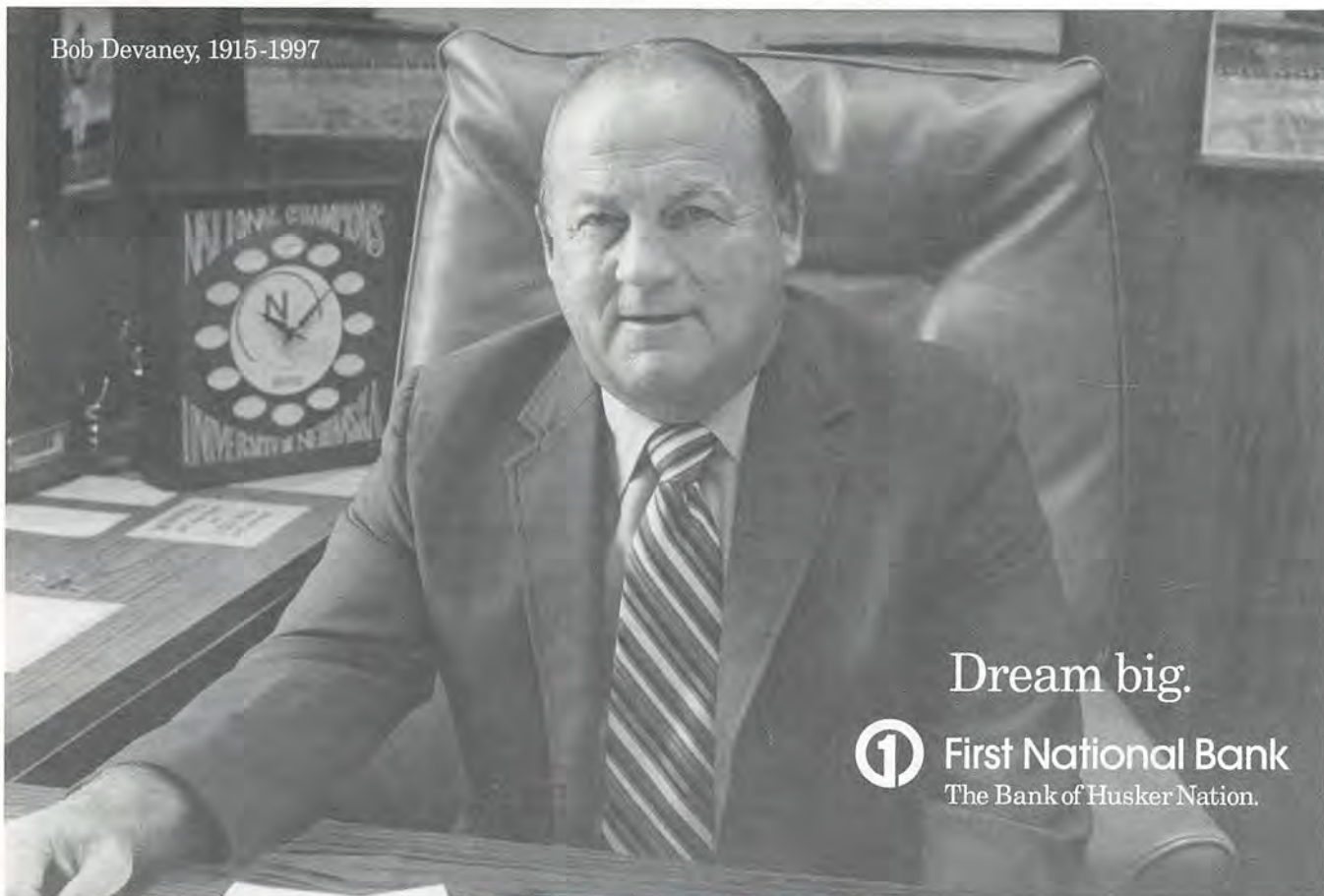
fashion. "Actually, what happened was coach Dennis Wagner came to watch the big running back (Kenny Wilson) and some of the other players from Butler CC when we beat them 17-14 in the Top Of The Mountain Bowl, and he saw me and must've liked what he saw," he said. "That's how this whole thing got started really. It's kind of strange how it happened, but I'm not complaining."

With Nicks playing the left tackle position, Haines will likely start out at right tackle and should provide immediate depth and perhaps even win a starting spot.


In addition to the two offensive tackles, the Husker staff also received a commitment from Compton (Calif.) Community College safety Ashlee Palmer (6-3, 215, 4.5). Palmer will join the team in the fall and is expected to contend strongly for a starting position at either free or strong safety. He will join former Compton College teammates Ola Dagunduro and Brandon Johnson on the Husker defense. ■

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And More

'Roll With the Punches'

Basketball has helped Dourisseau learn to deal with the good and the bad

By Mike Babcock

Internet chat rooms tend to heat up with criticism when the Nebraska basketball team isn't playing well. Jason Dourisseau knows how it is, though not necessarily from firsthand experience. Most of the time, someone has to tell him what people are posting. He rarely reads it.

That's the best way to handle the posts, whether negative or positive, because "if you read that stuff, it's going to take away from what you're trying to accomplish as a group," he said.

"When we're playing good, they love you. When we're not, they hate you. You really can't worry about it. You just try to do the best you can, for yourself and for your team."

The Cornhusker senior is matter-of-fact not defensive about such criticism, a reflection of the maturity that contributed to his being named a co-captain. "I'm more even-keel," he said.

"I try not to get too high or too low. I try to roll with the punches."

And there have been plenty of punches thrown Nebraska's way during his first three-plus seasons. The Cornhuskers were 11-19 when he was a freshman, 18-13 when he was a sophomore — including a trip to the NIT — and 14-14 last season. Their

best Big 12 finish has been an eighth-place tie.

"We've had a lot of adversity here," said Dourisseau. "It hasn't always been peaches and cream. Basketball has been a learning tool for me. I've learned how to deal with the good and the bad, take it all in. That's how life is going to treat you, so I think it has prepared me to move on."

Not that he's ready to move on just yet. More that half of his senior season remains. Even so, the end of his Cornhusker career is in sight; the games are numbered.

As with most student-athletes, the time has passed all too quickly for Dourisseau, who arrived in a highly regarded 2002 recruiting class that included Omaha (Neb.) Burke High School teammate Roy Enright as well as Wes Wilkinson and junior college transfer Nate Johnson.

All saw action that season, with Johnson starting and Dourisseau and Wilkinson appearing in every game. The 6-foot-10 Enright played sparingly in only 13 games, however, and transferred. He is averaging double-figure scoring and leading St. Francis (Pa.) in rebounding this season.

In retrospect, all three freshmen would have benefited from redshirting. "But you can't look at it like that because when we came in, they really

couldn't afford to redshirt us," Dourisseau said.

"A lot of guys had graduated, so we had to fill some holes."

He played the most of the freshmen, averaging 17 minutes and starting three times. Wilkinson averaged 10 minutes and started twice during the conference season.

Both struggled offensively. Dourisseau hit only 35 percent of his field goal attempts, including 24 percent from 3-point range. That was an eye-opener. He had considered him-





Through eight games, senior Jason Dourisseau was NU's second-leading scorer at 12.1 points per game.

Associate head coach Scott Spinelli arrived in 2003 and helped with that.

"He really taught a lot of footwork that they teach wings at the next level," Dourisseau said. "I'm starting to gain more and more confidence in my outside shot, but in a game, I'm thinking, 'Get to the basket.' When teams start scouting me, that's when, obviously, I'll have to try to hit a few outside jumpers. But slashing is definitely my strength. And I feel I'm pretty good at it, too."

Through mid-December, he was shooting better than 50 percent from the field.

He was efficient offensively, a quality he admires in Dirk Nowitzki, his "second-favorite player" on his favorite NBA team, the Dallas Mavericks. Nowitzki is second to the Los Angeles Lakers' Kobe Bryant. "I know a lot of people aren't going to like to hear that I'm a big Kobe fan," said Dourisseau.

In any case, Nowitzki's "offensive game is artwork to me. I enjoy watching him. He doesn't need 30-some odd shots a night to get his 20, 25 (points). His game is just efficient."

Likewise, "I don't need a high volume of shots because we have guys that can shoot the lights out. I want quality shots and (to) make a high percentage. I think that's when I'm most effective."

He has been less than effective at the free throw line, however. He had made just more than 53 percent for his career going into this season — including 45 percent as a sophomore.

He has worked diligently on his free throw shooting, and he can knock them down in practice, he said. The problem during games is more mental than a result of poor technique.

Dourisseau, who is on schedule to graduate in May, celebrated his 22nd birthday on the day before the South Dakota State game. As a youngster, birthdays were "a huge deal," he said. "I had a party, presents. I was excited to get older. Now it's like, 'Man, I'm already 22-years-old.'"

When he was a freshman at Nebraska, he didn't understand what it took to play at the major college level, he said. But then most fresh-

men don't. In high school, he just played the game and didn't concern himself with the mental aspects, the focus necessary to succeed night in and night out.

Since he is close to finishing his schoolwork, he hasn't had class in the morning on Mondays, Wednesdays and Fridays this semester. So he has gone to the Devaney Sports Center to shoot. "I've had a lot more time to work on my game and relax, get more sleep. It's a lot more liberating," he said.

He has learned the value of rest and diet is handling the physical pounding he takes driving to the basket against forwards that are as much as 30 or 40 pounds heavier.

He also has learned the value of ignoring Internet chat. Fans "kill you sometimes," Dourisseau said. "They're anonymous, just blasting people. If they're going to get on someone in a public forum, say something, and they don't have the guts to put their name on it, you really can't take that to heart."

"They sit there and chat for hours and post. It just gives them something to do." ■

Men's Basketball

Overall: 6-2/Big 12: 0-0

Nov. 18	*Longwood, W 80-65
Nov. 19	*Yale, W 73-64
Nov. 20	*Louisiana Tech, W 59-56
Nov. 27	SE Missouri State, W 69-54
Nov. 30	Marquette, W 84-74
Dec. 3	Ala.-Birmingham, L 73-72
Dec. 8	South Dakota State, W 76-67
Dec. 11	@Creighton, L 70-44
Dec. 17	Chicago State
Dec. 19	North Carolina A&T (FSN)
Dec. 21	Alabama A&M
Dec. 31	**Florida State (FSNMW)
Jan. 3	Northern Colorado
Jan. 7	Oklahoma (ESPN+)
Jan. 11	@Kansas State (FSN)
Jan. 17	Iowa State (FSN)
Jan. 21	@Kansas (ESPN)
Jan. 25	@Colorado (FSN)
Jan. 28	Missouri (ESPN+)
Jan. 31	@Oklahoma State (ESPN+)
Feb. 4	Baylor (ESPN+)
Feb. 8	Kansas (FSN)
Feb. 11	@Texas (ESPN)
Feb. 15	@Iowa State (FSN)
Feb. 18	Texas Tech (ESPN+)
Feb. 22	Colorado
Feb. 25	@Texas A&M (ESPN+)
March 1	Kansas State (FSN)
March 5	@Missouri (ESPN+)
Mar. 9-12	@Big 12 Tournament, Dallas, Texas (ERT)
	*John Thompson Classic, Lincoln, Neb.
	**Orange Bowl Classic, Miami, Fla.

self a capable 3-point shooter in high school, though he didn't make that high of a percentage as a senior, he said. So after his freshman season at Nebraska, he decided "maybe that's not the shot for me."

Though he has never been hesitant to attack the basket, that became a point of emphasis. "I worked on becoming more of a slasher," said the 6-6, 200-pound Dourisseau. "I was a slasher in high school as well, but I really went back to it and worked on different footwork."

Alaska Gem

Talented NU freshman drew little recruiting attention for most of her high school career

By Terry Douglass

When you live in Alaska, getting your basketball talents discovered by a Division I coach ranks among the most difficult of tasks.

Just ask Nebraska's Kelsey Griffin. Despite being 6-foot-2 and the star player at Chugiak High School in Eagle River, Alaska, Griffin ultimately figured she'd have to settle for playing for a Division III program, maybe a Division II — if she was lucky.

Not that Griffin lacked confidence in her abilities, but quite frankly, it's just difficult to get noticed in Alaska.

"It is very hard, because down in the lower 48, coaches will be able to come see your basketball game, and it's an hour drive or a two-hour plane ride — something simple like that," Griffin said. "In Alaska, you very rarely get people that come to your games. You may get lucky for a couple of Division II coaches to come see the state tournament, and that's really about it.

"Most of the recruiting happens over the summer on AAU teams, and Alaska only puts out two AAU teams for girls in high school, so it is pretty hard to get noticed."

Couple the geographic challenges with the fact that Griffin had a knee injury as a junior, and she was official-

#23 KELSEY GRIFFIN **FRESHMAN FORWARD**

ly flying well below the recruiting radar of most Division I coaches.

"She was not a kid who was even on a recruiting list during her junior season," Nebraska coach Connie Yori said. "Then, one of my assistants saw her play the summer before her senior year. We followed her, then had another one of my assistants watch her.

"We were pretty confident by then that Kelsey was a player who could help us."

Several other Division I coaches apparently came to the same conclusion. In almost no time at all, Griffin suddenly became a hot property prior to her senior season.

"I just was kind of overwhelmed and didn't know what to do," Griffin said. "I was so surprised. My phone was ringing off the hook, and it went from Division III schools to Division I schools, and it was so hard sorting them all out.

"It was one of the biggest decisions I've ever made and it was hard, but I'm very happy."

Griffin wound up picking the Cornhuskers over Michigan State and Arizona State. In the end, she said it essentially came down to a conversation she had with Yori during a recruiting visit.

"Coach Yori sat me down and said, 'Everything aside, we want you here, and you're going to do great things for our program,' " Griffin said. "None of the other coaches had just sat me down and not tried to sweet talk me. Coach Yori was very straightforward, and I really appreciated that."



Scott Bruhn

For Yori, the sales pitch was easy because she only had to tell the truth.

"We just told Kelsey that we thought she could play for us," Yori said. "You don't say that to kids unless you really think that's true. We felt like she was somebody that could make a real difference for us, and it has proven to be true."

And how.

Through Nebraska's first seven games, Griffin led the team in scoring (17.3 points per game) and rebounding (eight per game), while shooting 59 percent from the field. The freshman forward scored 31 points in a Nov. 27 win over Texas A&M-Corpus Christi.

"We knew when we recruited her that she was a good player," Yori said. "Early on, we identified that what we thought in the recruiting process was true, probably plus some — that she is a special, special kid. The way she has performed early in the season has only reinforced for us what we thought we already knew."

It appears that Griffin is the only one in the program truly surprised by her instant success. After all, she came to Lincoln merely desiring to get some quality minutes off the

bench, hoping to contribute. Her initial goal for her freshman season: Start one game.

Obviously, Griffin's goals have been readjusted.

"My goal right now is to average a double-double," Griffin said. "I really think that's possible. I know I need to step up on my rebounding. Usually, if a team wins the battle of the boards, they'll win the game, so rebounding is such a key."

Griffin is the first to say that she has a lot to learn, especially on the defensive end. As the Alaska Gatorade player of the year, she would simply play behind opposing post players in high school and rely on her height advantage to block shots.

In the college ranks, Griffin's height advantage often doesn't exist. Defensive positioning had become essential.

"I knew I was far behind, especially on the defensive end, so I knew I had a lot of work to do to catch up," Griffin said. "I've been practicing with some great post players here, so watching them and learning from them has helped me.

"I'm going to come up against

some great, great post players, so I know I still have my work cut out for me. I need to keep improving."

It's exactly that type of attitude that has been especially pleasing to Yori. Truth is, Yori said Griffin isn't a bad defensive player and that she's actually more advanced than most freshmen posts at this point.

"But that's just the type of kid Kelsey is," Yori said. "She's a perfectionist. She wants to be good at everything we ask her to do, and that's a great quality.

"She's rare in that she recognizes when she makes a mistake. She's self-critical, and she works to correct that."

Griffin said she makes improvement her No. 1 priority.

"One of the big things that I was so excited about, coming in and playing college basketball was the idea of getting better," Griffin said. "Especially coming here, to a Big 12 school that already had great post players. I knew I was going to be challenged, and I was so looking forward to that." ■

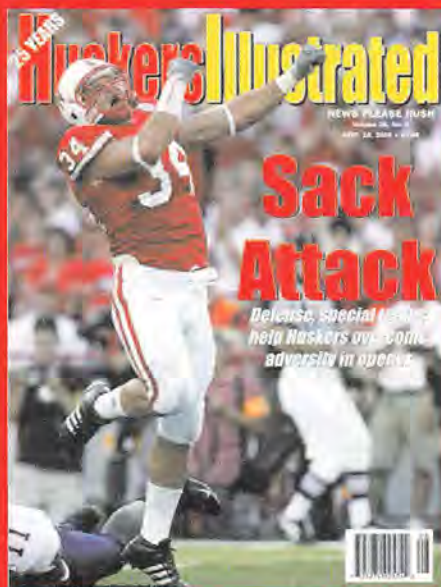
Terry Douglass is the sports editor of the *Grand Island (Neb.) Independent*. He can be reached at terry.douglass@charter.net.

WOMEN'S BASKETBALL

Overall: 4-3/Big 12: 0-0

Nov. 19 South Dakota State, L 68-49
Nov. 21 Creighton, W 84-50
Nov. 25 *LSU, L 74-55
Nov. 27 *TAMU-Corpus Christi, W 76-64
Dec. 3 @Minnesota, L 78-70
Dec. 7 Texas Southern, W 93-68
Dec. 10 @Northwestern, W 80-50
Dec. 17 @Michigan (FSNMW)
Dec. 20 Texas State
Dec. 29 Grambling State
Dec. 31 Northern Arizona
Jan. 4 @Colorado (FSNRM)
Jan. 7 Kansas (FSNMW)
Jan. 11 Missouri
Jan. 14 @Iowa State
Jan. 18 Texas
Jan. 21 @Texas Tech (FSN)
Jan. 28 Colorado
Feb. 1 Iowa State (Mediacom)
Feb. 4 @Kansas State (FSN)
Feb. 8 @Baylor (CSTV)
Feb. 11 Texas A&M (FSN)
Feb. 15 @Kansas
Feb. 18 Kansas State
Feb. 21 Oklahoma State
Feb. 26 @Oklahoma (ESPN2)
March 1 @Missouri
Mar. 7-11 @Big 12 Tournament, Dallas, Texas
*Miami Thanksgiving Classic, Miami, Fla.

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RESULTS, SCHEDULE

AVCA/NACWAA Showcase At Omaha, Neb.

Aug. 26 Hawaii	W 3-0
Aug. 27 Stanford	W 3-0

Ohio State Tournament At Columbus, Ohio

Sept. 2 Ohio State	W 3-0
Sept. 3 Michigan	W 3-0

Sept. 5 @Minnesota	W 3-2
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Players Challenge At Lincoln, Neb.

Sept. 9 Pepperdine	W 3-0
Sept. 10 Pacific	W 3-0
Sept. 11 Penn State	W 3-0

Sept. 17 @Colorado	W 3-0
Sept. 21 Texas A&M	W 3-0
Sept. 24 Iowa State	W 3-0
Sept. 28 @Oklahoma	W 3-1
Oct. 1 Baylor	W 3-0
Oct. 5 @Missouri	W 3-1
Oct. 8 @Kansas	W 3-1
Oct. 11 Creighton	W 3-0
Oct. 12 Texas Tech	W 3-0

Oct. 15 Texas	W 3-0
Oct. 19 @Kansas State	W 3-0
Oct. 26 Kansas	W 3-0
Oct. 29 @Texas Tech	W 3-0
Nov. 2 Oklahoma	W 3-0
Nov. 5 @Iowa State	W 3-0
Nov. 9 @Texas A&M	W 3-0
Nov. 13 Missouri (CSTV)	W 3-2
Nov. 16 @Baylor	W 3-0
Nov. 19 Kansas State	W 3-1
Nov. 23 Colorado	W 3-0
Nov. 26 @Texas	L 3-2

NCAA First/Second Rounds At NU Coliseum, Lincoln, Neb.

Dec. 2 Alabama A&M	W 3-0
Dec. 3 Duke	W 3-0

NCAA Regionals At Qwest Center, Omaha, Neb.

Dec. 9 UCLA	W 3-0
Dec. 10 Florida	W 3-0

NCAA Final Four At San Antonio, Texas

Dec. 15 Santa Clara (ESPNU)	
Dec. 17 NCAA Championship	

Regional Champs

Junior outside hitter Christina Houghtelling (3) celebrates match point with teammates Melissa Elmer (8) and Sarah Pavan (9) as top-ranked Nebraska completes a sweep (30-26, 30-24, 30-16) of fourth-ranked Florida in front of an NCAA-record crowd of 15,119 in the regional final Dec. 10 at the Qwest Center Omaha. Houghtelling led the Huskers with 18 kills. In other regional final action, senior Jennifer Saleaumua (26) and sophomore Tracy Stalls (11) combine to block Florida's Kari Klinkenborg (top right) and freshman Jordan Larson (10) executes a jump serve (bottom right) in front of the huge crowd. NU, which advanced to the NCAA Volleyball Final Four Dec. 15-17 in San Antonio, had advanced to the regional final with a 30-28, 30-24, 30-16 sweep of No. 14 UCLA in front of a then-postseason record crowd of 14,489. (Photos by Scott Bruhn)





Redshirt freshman Paul Donahoe won 12 of his first 13 matches at 125 pounds.

Big Enough

Confidence, work ethic help NU 125-pounder Donahoe succeed
By Mike Finn

Is it possible to be too small to wrestle on the Div. I level?

That's the question that 125-pound Paul Donahoe heard even though the native of Davison, Mich., had won two state championships for Davison High and a pair of Junior National freestyle titles before signing his name on a Husker scholarship offer.

"I was still a little small for my weight class," said Donahoe, who at the time he was being recruited by Nebraska, weighed just 115 pounds when he wrestled at 119 pounds, which is six pounds lighter than college wrestling's lightest weight. "I had to get a little bigger. I also had to improve a lot of the mat as well."

And that is about the only reason Donahoe chose to redshirt during the 2004-05 season, which he used to gain muscle while winning 20 of 22 matches and five championships in open tournaments as an unattached wrestler.

"He could have wrestled as a true freshman, but he got a lot stronger and bigger," said NU head coach Mark Manning. "He was considered undersized by a lot of people. A lot of people thought Paul would never have been strong enough to compete

well enough at 125 pounds."

But that didn't scare Manning from recruiting Donahoe because Manning also had previous experience with a former question-mark recruit who eventually became a national champion.

"He's kind of like Jason Powell coming out of high school," said Manning, referring to the current Nebraska assistant coach who won an NCAA title at 125 pounds in 2004. And two years later, Powell is helping Donahoe hopefully reach the same ending.

"I work out with an NCAA champion every day," said Donahoe, who won 12 of his first 13 matches this year. "Jason Powell was one of the best on-top technicians ever, and I just learn a lot from him. I catch a lot of the things that he does."

And that is one of the reasons that

Donahoe has become one of the better 125-pounders in the country, especially after his 15-0 technical fall over Michigan's Paul Shutich gave the young Huskers an 18-16 victory over the No. 3-ranked Wolverines, Dec. 9, in what proved to be a happy homecoming for Donahoe in his home state.

"That kid (Shutich) beat me in the state finals when I was junior, and I was able to tech-fall him this year," said Donahoe. "There are a lot of people out there who thought that kid was better than me."

Donahoe is one of a growing number of freshmen who are making an impact in their first year on the varsity level. In the Dec. 12 national rankings by Wrestling International Newsmagazine, 24 freshmen were ranked among the Top 20 wrestlers at 10 different college weights. That included Donahoe, who was rated No. 15 at 125 and fellow Husker freshman Chris Oliver, who was rated No. 19 at 157.

"We talked before the season that we had to step it up and be the young leaders on the team," said Donahoe.

"You just go out there and do what you do."

"There are just some tough young freshmen coming out these days," Manning said. "A lot of the credit goes to the high school coaches. In Paul's case, he had Roy Hall, one of the best high school coaches out there. A lot of kids come from good clubs and learn from ex-wrestlers who have competed on the highest level. Kids are used to wrestling college guys, and they are taught good technique. They are more ready for the physicalness of college wrestling."

Manning said confidence and a strong work ethic are reasons for Donahoe's success.

"He's an extremely hard worker," the fourth-year Nebraska coach said. "He wrestles with a lot of intensity and energy on the mat. He's a pretty intense guy. People who work hard usually are rewarded. He's intense in the practice room, and that shows in his performance."

Manning said Donahoe hates to lose at anything he does, including a game of cards with coaches and

teammates.

"He gets upset, gets mad," Manning joked. "We have to rib him and fuel the fire. He's a very competitive young man. In running sprints, (Nebraska's 174-pound senior) Jacob Klein for the last four years had won every sprint run in our preseason. When Paul came in here last year, he didn't care what Jacob had done. He had to beat him in every run and wear him out. That shows good leadership skills."

Donahoe, who started wrestling at age 6 and had four sisters growing up with parents Laura and Kenny Donahoe, agreed that life is one big competitive challenge for him.

"What happens on the mat, stays on the mat, but I'm a pretty competitive person in other sports as well," said Donahoe, who also lettered in cross country in high school. "I like to have a good time and have fun."

Donahoe's also getting the last laugh that big hearts come in little packages. ■

Mike Finn is the editor of Wrestling International Newsmagazine. He can be reached at mikef@win-magazine.com



HUDDLES

Huddles are the backbone of the FCA ministry on campus. Huddles are school-identified groups that meet on a regular basis to study the Word, to encourage each other to grow in their faith, and to impact their campus for Jesus Christ.

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22 Junior High/Middle Schools, 1 Elementary

CHAPELS/CHAPLAINS

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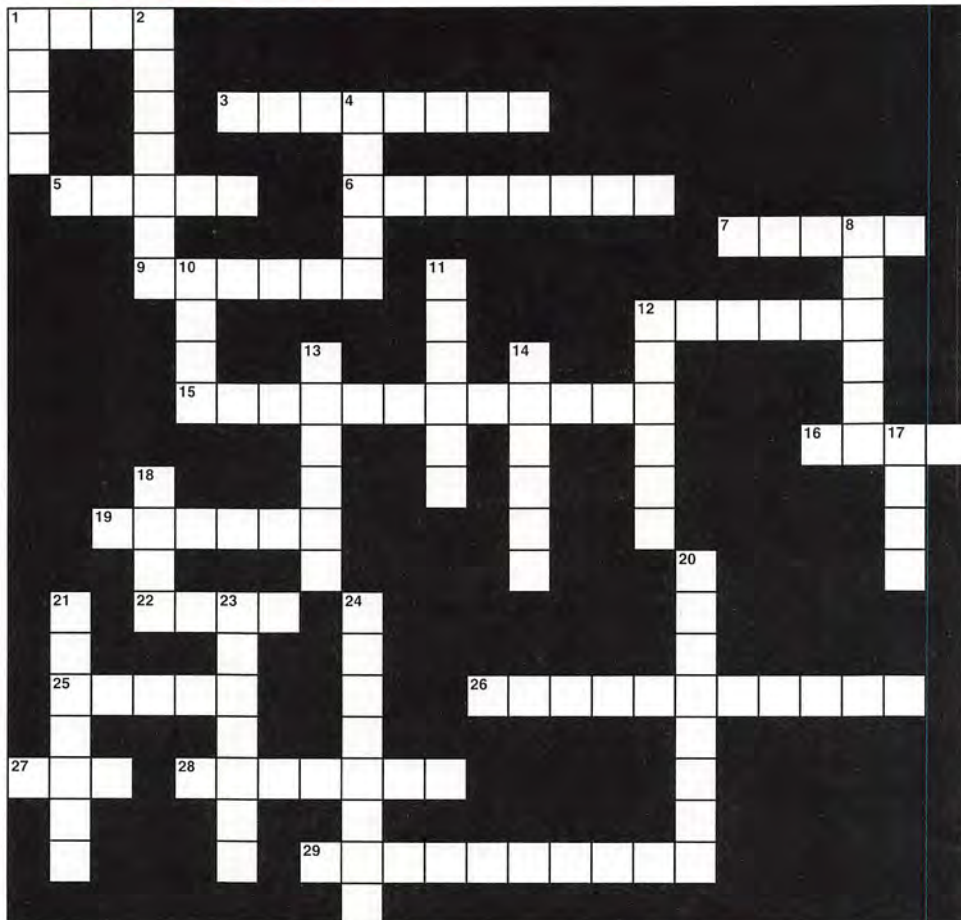
ACROSS

- 1 2005 Heisman Trophy winner
- 3 Ex-Husker linebacker now with Atlanta
- 5 Leading receiver for 2005
- 6 Leader in sacks for 2005
- 7 Famous San Antonio landmark
- 9 Wears No. 2
- 12 1997 Outland Trophy winner
- 15 Former Michigan head coach
- 16 Michigan head coach
- 19 Wears No. 1
- 22 Network for Alamo Bowl
- 25 Michigan's 2005 MVP
- 26 Ex-Husker among NFL sack leaders
- 27 2006 non-conference opponent
- 28 1997 Lombardi Award winner
- 29 Michigan nickname

DOWN

- 1 Wears No. 3
- 2 Guard who made first start vs. Colorado
- 4 Leading rusher vs. Colorado
- 8 Redshirt freshman offensive tackle
- 10 Leading receiver vs. Colorado
- 11 Leading tackler for 2005
- 12 Wears No. 99
- 13 Head coach for last Alamo Bowl appearance
- 14 Ex-Husker linebacker now with Dallas
- 17 Ex-Husker linebacker now with Tampa Bay
- 18 BCS championship bowl game
- 20 Head coach in 1961
- 21 True freshman offensive tackle
- 23 Tackle who made first start vs. Colorado
- 24 Michigan campus location

Answers in February issue



HUSKERNUTZ



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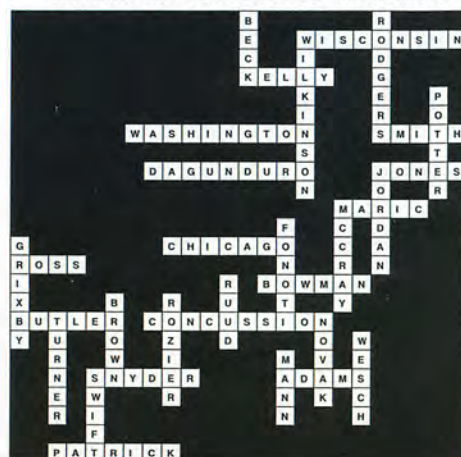
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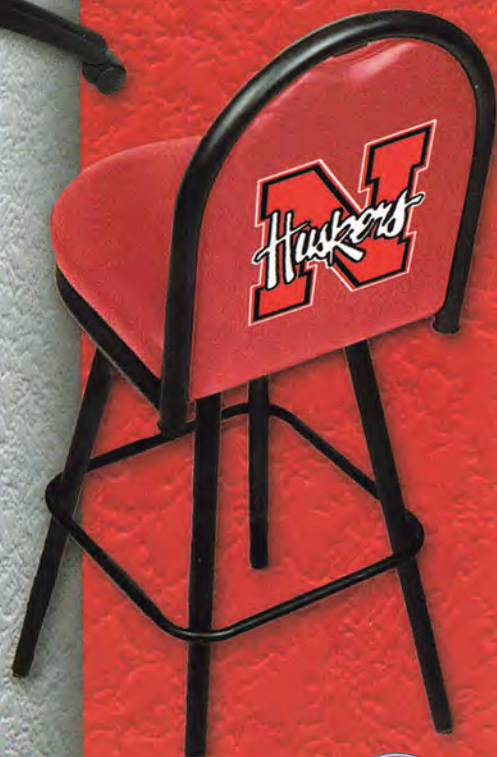
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Similar Opportunity

Devaney cherished victory over Michigan in second game of his first season



Mike BABCOCK

AT THE BIG RED BREAKFAST the week following the Colorado game, intentional or not, Bill Callahan paid tribute to Bob Devaney by offering a bit of humor that served the Hall of Fame coach well. Media types used to call him "sweet old Bill," Callahan said. Now it's just the initials.

That worked with "sweet old Bob," too, although depending on the audience, Devaney didn't necessarily point to reporters as the source of the reference.

Devaney had lots of one-liners and anecdotes, like the time at Wyoming when he bumped into a little old lady getting off a train following a road game in which his team had played poorly.

Ever the gentleman, he tipped his hat. "Pardon me, Mam, I meant no offense."

She glared at him and replied, "Your defense stinks, too."

Or, Devaney would say, when he recruited in rural areas and saw a strapping young man in a field behind a horse-drawn plow, he would stop and ask directions to the nearest town.

If the young man pointed the way, he would thank the young man and drive on. If the young man picked up the plow to point, however, he would offer a scholarship on the spot.

If he was speaking to a group, Devaney might follow the young-man-and-the-plow story with a comment about one of his players.

"Larry Jacobson was outstanding," he would say.

He would pause and then add: "That's where we found Larry, out standing in a field."

(The line worked even better for someone who was "outstanding in his field.")

In that same vein, Devaney would say that the way he would identify backs from linemen was simple enough. He would run them into the woods. Those who ran around the trees were the backs. And those who ran over the trees were the linemen. Ta-dum. But seriously, folks . . .

I never met Duffy Daugherty, for whom Devaney was an assistant at Michigan State. But my guess is, Daugherty told many of the same stories. They were two of a kind, and long-time friends.

Daugherty played an important role in Cornhusker history, recommending Devaney to Nebraska after Bill Jennings was fired and then encouraging him to take the job when it was offered.

Nebraska chancellor Clifford Hardin, a former professor of agriculture at Michigan State, had contacted Daugherty to gauge his interest in the position. He had none.

Daugherty assured Devaney he could win a national

championship at Nebraska, something he couldn't do at Wyoming. And it didn't take long to realize his friend was right.

Jennings hadn't been successful on the field, five consecutive losing seasons. But he and his staff had recruited well, leaving his successor with sufficient talent for an immediate turnaround. Devaney, who never coached a losing season at any level, supplied the organization and a plan.

A key element of his plan was the second game of his first season against Michigan in Ann Arbor. He and his assistants had to set a goal, Devaney wrote in his 1981 autobiography. They "didn't think we were quite good enough to win the Big Eight or go undefeated. So we never talked like that."

What they did talk about was going to Michigan Stadium and winning.

The Wolverines had tradition and national credibility associated with the Big Ten, in which Nebraska once coveted membership. They didn't have a lot returning from a 6-3 team in 1961, however. "We watched a lot of film on Michigan," Devaney wrote. "And we didn't think they were that great."

As it turned out, they weren't. Nebraska won 25-13, a victory about which Devaney would write: "I'm not so sure I don't cherish it as much as any game I ever coached."

Most fans would pick the 35-31 "Game of the Century" against Oklahoma as the pinnacle of Devaney's career. But the Michigan victory "put us on the map," he wrote.

"It showed the country that we were turning things around."

Four decades later, a game against Michigan offers a similar opportunity, though these Wolverines are considerably better and Nebraska already appears to be well on its way to a turnaround.

Even so, this season has been one of extremes, from justified optimism following the Texas Tech loss to abject pessimism following the Kansas loss and back to unbounded optimism following the Colorado victory, from "sweet old Bill" to just the initials and back to "sweet old Bill."

Callahan was able to use that joke following the Colorado game. In fact, with an Alamo Bowl victory against Michigan, folks could probably laugh a little about the Kansas loss, too.

Devaney used to say that as he walked off the field following the Cornhuskers' 47-0 loss at Oklahoma in 1968, an irate fan yelled something that sounded like "Sebastian" at him.

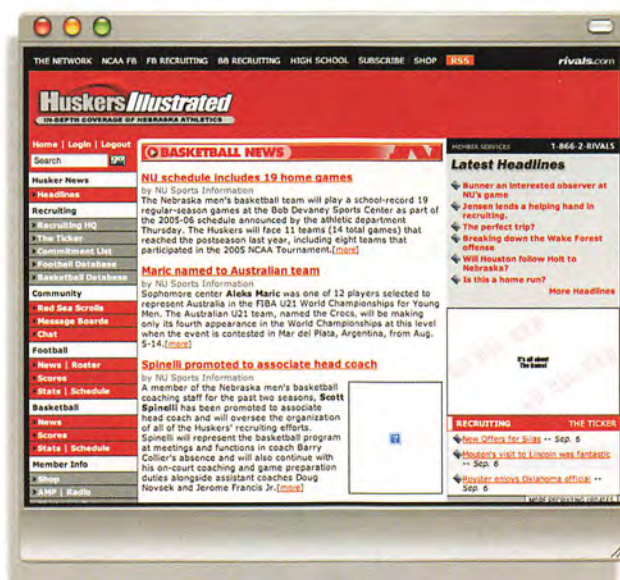
The success he enjoyed in the seasons after that loss made the story funny. ■



Bob Devaney's first Nebraska team won 25-13 at Michigan in 1962.

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